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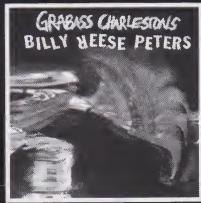
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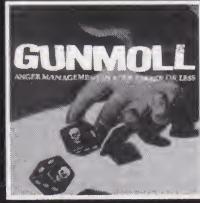
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When Sean and I started the print version of *Razorcake* over a year ago, we sat down and thought hard about the direction we wanted to take the zine. Sure, it was going to focus around our first love: punk rock music. We wanted it to be a little more but we didn't want to become blowhard assholes about it, either. You see, both Sean and I walk two lines. We both love a good fart joke and we both regularly engage in serious political discussions. Usually, it's just us two, hanging out, making each other crack up, listening to records, eating beenie-weenie, and talking shop, taking turns standing on a milk crate in the living room, delivering speeches to one another. That's not entirely how it is, but it's pretty close.

With that in mind, I couldn't be happier that *Razorcake*'s been able to pull off somewhat of a rarity. In our pages, we can embrace both the pseudo-rape, intellishock of The Dwarves and the edgy, arty, earnest audial Rome plow of Fugazi without contradiction. You see, it's my personal belief that people are way too hung up on what is or isn't punk rock, or what is or isn't offending them that they're spending so much time looking at a hole in the ground to shove a band or a zine into that they forget that labeling isn't the point. The point is to make yourself a life and hopefully have a good soundtrack to it and something worthwhile to read.

In other words, *Razorcake* doesn't and won't let a specific, pre-determined doctrine become our boss. Mostly, we're modeling this zine after two lives full of hard work, lots of thinking, tons of laughing, and almost endless struggle.

AD DEADLINE FOR ISSUE #8

April 1, 2002

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ADVERTISING STIPULATIONS

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- Make ads the right size and orientation. If ads are the wrong size, they won't run or we'll chop 'em up with scissors to fit.

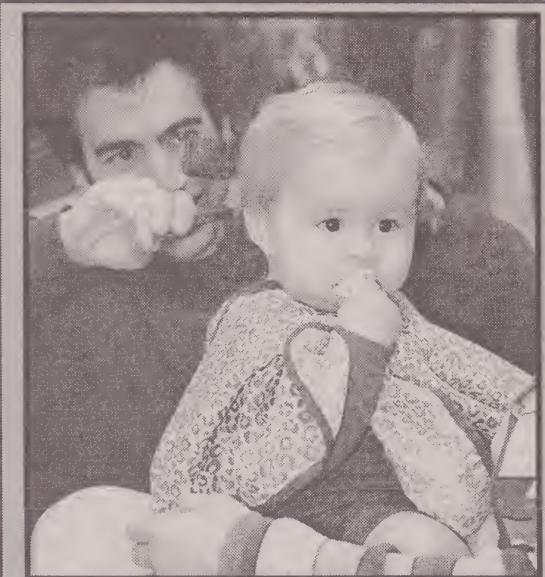
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Razorcake is made by: Sean Carswell, Todd Taylor, ktspin, and Skinny Dan. **Congratulations:** The marriage of Jimmy Alvarado and his lovely wife Karla. **Thank you list:** Megaton thanks to Art Fuentes and Matt Average. Art drew the illustration for the cover and Matt took the picture of Toys That Kill; Julia Smut for all the printing know-how for the cover; Liz O. for her KXLU article and the KXLU staff for helping us with the graphics; Miss Namella J. Kim for her Tight Bros From Way Back When interview and her record reviews and Shawn Medina for a couple of the photos; Benjones for the clown sketch in Sean's article; Brian Archer for being a model in Money's column; Matt Average for laying out the Al Quint interview, for the Henry picture, for his help on the Toys That Kill interview, and for record and zine reviews; Andy Junk for the Rhythm Chicken column pictures; Aaron Poehler, Donofthedead, Jessica, Harmonee, Kat Jetson, Roger Moser Jr., Sara Isett, Sarah A. Stierch, and Toby Tober for their record reviews; Joe for his zine reviews; and Megan Tesh, Kat Jetson, Art Fuentes, and Designated Dale for stuffing the inserts in the magazine. A truly thankless task.

In the perfect world, Redd Foxx would be playing chess with Noam Chomsky and we'd be in charge of the transcription. You'd get not only detailed commentary on how the drug war is fabricated by the CIA, you'd get a couple of fine hooker jokes and tips on throwing up in a cab. Serious shit and laughter. That's what I want *Razorcake* to aspire to.

So, at the end of finishing this issue, I realized that we've accomplished our modest goal of filling in part of the gulf separating humor and seriousness, the sacred and the profane. It makes me truly proud that Nardwuar the Human Serviette can spur a memory from Ian McCulloch about a former bandmate being sucked off by his German Sheppard; not because Nardwuar was probing for this particular story, but the fact that the story came up at all. Position such jocularity against what Sean and I tackle in this issue. No matter how much one tries, talking about the connection between Hitler and Henry Ford just isn't a laughing matter. The same goes for Sean's article on the inner machinations of independent publishing. However, I like the juxtaposition and more so, I enjoy the fact that we can publish a wide spectrum (from bestiality to world domination to eeking out a living on a shoestring) without alienating ourselves, biting our tongues, or fearing that our bosses are going to tell us to start all over again.

-Todd



Mr. Henry Average's Skull-Clippin' Top Five

(in no particular order):

1. Westwood Park
2. Skateboarding
3. Trucks
4. Books, books, and more books!
5. Walking and climbing

As far as music, he's rocking out to Discharge, Misery, Japanese and Swedish hardcore, as well as Cuban jazz. He picks what he wants to hear, and nine times out ten it's fast, noisy, and with big drums.

For the graphics, he uses a combination of hand-drawn sketches and computer-generated art. He also enjoys reading comic books and watching old movies. He's a fan of the band R.E.M. and the movie *Seven*. He's also a fan of the TV show *Seinfeld* and the book *The Catcher in the Rye*. He's a fan of the band R.E.M. and the movie *Seven*. He's also a fan of the TV show *Seinfeld* and the book *The Catcher in the Rye*.

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Razorcake is bi-monthly. Issues are \$3.00 ppd. in the U.S. Yearly subscriptions (six issues) are \$15.00. Plus you get some free shit. These prices are only valid for people who live in the US and are not in prison. Issues and subs are more for everyone else (because we have to pay more in postage). Write or email us and we'll give you a price.



Designated Dale

I'm Against It



...tensions between both teams were already thick as Oprah's chins.

Beat on the brat, beat on the brat, beat on the brat with a baseball bat, oh yeah, oh yeah, oh-ho..." When this particular Ramones song crushes your audio senses, just how do those lyrics come across to you? Viciously throttling that impossible co-worker down to the ground with a Louisville Slugger? Filling some unsuspecting (but deserving) fool's mouth with the barrel end of the same bat? Or the actual relation to the song that the Ramones had in mind of playing batter-up with the heads of little, unruly, spoiled heathens that lived in their apartment buildings while growing up in Forest Hills, Queens? Whatever your own personal interpretation, I'm quite sure it involves a certain satisfying "crack" of wood. Most recently, this rollicking cut off of the Ramones' first LP has been calling to mind a certain all-star pitcher that dominated the National League side of baseball through the 1960's – the San Francisco Giants' Juan Marichal (which is ironic, because I'm usually a fan of any sports team that hails from the Ramones' hometown – New York City and they blast the opening to "Blitzkrieg Bop" over the p.a. at Yankee stadium, fuck you very much). The reason why Marichal's name rings in my brain now when I hear "Beat on the Brat" is because Juan was involved in a punk-ass-fuck incident quite some years back that our very own Gary Hornberger was filling me in on while we were both watching the World Series last summer. You all know Gary. He's that guy who's often exclaiming at the right moment that "It's good to be the king!" He's that guy at The Dickies gig yelling "STAN!" (Speaking of Stan Lee...Stan – how the shit are ya?) He's also our *Razorcake* columnist who covers the comics and also covers the area of telling it like it is, with sincere hopes of pissing you off, God bless 'em. But Gary has always been very well-versed in baseball, basketball, and golf for all the many, many years I've known the guy.

What he told me last summer about Mr. Marichal caught me by surprise, since I always love the outrageous situations that people get themselves in during everyday life. Okay, okay, fer Chrissakes, quit yer henpecking, 'cause I can hear you all now – "What the hell was this Juan character involved in?!" Enough, already, Dale, ya big prick! Tell us what happened! Fuck you! Fuck baseball!" In a bit. You'll have to hold your goddamn stickhorses for a spell, pardner – we'll get to that in a while. Impatient fucks.

Ahem. Now, anyway, I know damn well that I'm no baseball expert, whatsoever. Of any sport, for that matter. Never have been. But I can pretty much finger out true punk spirit when the situation arises. Which brings us to this incident involving Juan Marichal. I must admit, I became quickly fascinated with what Gary had told me about him, so I wanted to dig deep and follow his career from the early days, so here's a lil' background research on what I found out (for those who are interested, ya buttholes. Read on – ya might just learn somethin', besides being impatient!) Born Oct. 20th, 1938 in Laguna Verde, Monte Cristi, (Dominican Republic) Juan had quickly developed into a shortstop in his early years. He made the switch to pitching during his one year serving the Dominican Air Force. He grabbed onto a \$500 cash bonus in 1958 when he was signed to a San Francisco farm contract by scouts Horacio Martinez and Alex Pompez, who saw that Marichal had the sure makings of a kick-ass all-star.

Making his way in the minors out in Michigan City, Ind., Juan earned rookie of the year status in the Midwest League with 21 wins (and an a 1.87 earned-run average, for alla you statistical fucks). He also led the league in total games and innings pitched.

Moving on and out to Springfield, Mass. in 1959, Juan continued his way up the ladder, making his mark as the leading

Eastern League pitcher in six different categories and formed his habit of running to and from the pitcher's mound, explaining that his then-manager, Andy Gilbert, slapped his players with a \$1 fine each time one of his team members failed to run to his position (talk about a fucking drill sergeant! I wonder if Andy Gilbert missed his calling as a traffic/parking officer?). It's stated that, from the very start of his pitching career, Marichal displayed a sniper's control despite an exaggerated, cartoon-like windup in which he raised his left foot head-high, like a fricking *Solid Gold* dancer or like Deney Terrio, the host of that unsettling *Dance Fever* show (no offense, Juan), while his right hand, ready to fire the ball, nearly brushed the dirt on the pitcher's mound. (I wonder if this technique would help me while playing electronic darts over at Gary's house, trying to whip his ass at cricket...) Juan was soon receiving a call from the big leagues – the San Francisco Giants – after helping put together an 11-5 record for his current Pacific Coast League team in Tacoma.

After settling in S.F. with his soon-to-be new team for a number of days, Juan was put in the position of pitching the Giants' batting practice. He was then approached by Giants' Manager Bill Rigney, who asked Juan if he was ready to start a game. The 21-year-old Juan Marichal calmly responded, "Sure, why not?" Thus his 1960 rookie year was born. Juan's debut was the stuff rookies would sell one of their testicles for. In his first Major League game, he smoked the first two Philadelphia batters. Not a one reached base until the seventh inning. With two outs in the eighth inning, Clay Dalrymple clinked a base hit to left field for the Phillies' only hit, giving the Giants a 2-0 victory. Incidentally, a total of twelve Phillies got fucked out of the batter's box on strikes. Not a bad first start, to say the least. When the newsmen went to interview Juan after the game, an interpreter for

Marichal told all of them, "He says he expected to win. He says he always expects to win. He doesn't even know the name of the man who got the hit." Sounds like the Majors had a huge up-and-comer mofo on their hands, and boy-o-friggin' boy were they right.

As Juan started to ease into his place amongst the other National Leaguers, his batting opponents were beginning to notice that, although Juan didn't possess any "big pitch," he did have his three dependable pitches – fastball, curve and slider. By throwing these by way of different speed and angle, Juan had thirteen lucky pitches up his righthanded sleeve to mindfuck his batters' minds with. And mindfuck the batters, he did. But Marichal took his initiating lumps in the first couple seasons, including a back injury in his rookie year that disabled him for a month. The next year, in 1961, he was spiked while covering first base. The following year, in 1962, a twisted ankle had him benched for thirty days, which was a rather shitty omen, because 1962 was his only World Series appearance against the Yankees, and Juan was injured on his index finger while trying to bunt and ended up leaving the game after four scoreless innings. I mean, shit, his first and final time in the Series, and he smashes his finger on a bunt. Enough to make one scream "FUCK!", no?

Nonetheless, Marichal went on leaving a leaping trail of flames trailing behind as the Giants' big gun. In 1963, he helped bring his team twenty-five wins, including pitching a no-hitter against Houston. Quite a few of his cohorts noticed that Marichal pitched with a finesse that seemed almost effortless, and this would often keep many batters' palms hot 'n sweaty and their sphincters puckered like a balloon knot. Phillies catcher Gus Triandos summed up this experience by speaking the hitters' sentiments one day after Juan allowed six measly hits in a 14-inning, 1-0 victory. "The thing I hate about that

guy," huffed Triandos, "is that it all appears so easy with him. It's one thing to get shut out against Sandy Koufax or Don Drysdale. At least with those two pitching at you, you can look out up there and see the cords standing out on the guy's neck. Marichal — he just stands there laughing at you." Hee. Marichal — I'm really starting to like this guy. But it gets better, dear readers. WAY better.

Last summer during the World Series, Gary and I were talking about the heated friction between Mike Piazza (N.Y. Mets) and Roger Clemens (N.Y. Yankees) during the 2000-2001 season's games. I asked Gary, "Hey — has a batter ever got to the point of being so fucking furious that he turns around and socks the catcher and/or umpire with his bat?" (Okay, boys and girls — NOW I'm gonna get to the incident that I was speaking of earlier! Gather 'round! The Punkrock Funtime Smile Hour is about to begin!) Gary thought I was goofin', but then he pondered my question for a few seconds, looked over at me, and said, "Yeah, man, there actually is one guy who did that. His name is Juan Marichal. Played in the '60s for the San Francisco Giants. Swung and bonked the catcher right in the fucking head." My first reaction was disbelief. Why didn't I ever hear about this? Why haven't I heard of this guy Marichal, I thought. Guess it really does pay to be well-versed in some sports like folks such as Gary, and this Marichal incident that Gary was speaking of peaked my interest like a blind man experiencing his first pink taco.

The incident went down like this: it was August 23rd, 1965. Juan and the San Francisco Giants were at playing at home against the Los Angeles Dodgers in the National League playoffs with their hearts and eyes set on winning the NL pennant to advance them to the World Series. This particular game was billed as a classic struggle between two of baseball's greatest badass pitchers, Sandy Koufax and Juan Marichal. But there was already some friction between these two teams way before the game began, because the last time they had met up on the field, both teams' benches had cleared out for an old-fashion brawl. (Which is always a joy to watch, like farmed pitcher Nolan Ryan showing a feisty rookie his way down to the ground with one of his fists — right, Sean? yuk yuk yuk...) Anyhoo, during Marichal's first-at-bat, one of Sandy Koufax's pitches was way off home plate. Coincidental? Hmm — I think I smell a fresh, hot pot of Getting Pissed Off-edness brewing. When the Dodger catcher, Johnny Roseboro, threw the ball back to Koufax, Marichal claimed the ball hit him in his right earlobe. In the autobiography that he wrote, Roseboro explained his side — "Koufax was constitutionally incapable of throwing at anyone's head. So after the second pitch, I dropped it, picked it up and in pegging it back to Sandy, I threw it about two inches past Juan's nose. It was intentionally all right. I meant for him to feel it. I was so mad I'd made up my mind that if he protested, I was going after him. He protested, so I started out of my crouch. I went to hit him with a punch, and he hit me with his bat." You know what? Good for him. Good for Juan. Know why I say that? Because Roseboro was more than egging it on with the ball throwback. Because tensions between both teams were already thick as Oprah's chins. Because Roseboro was obviously vying to push the fisticuffs envelope, as stated in his book excerpt. And you know what? Marichal delivered that envelope. Right upside Roseboro's head. You play, you fucking pay. Period. I'm in no way saying that what either of them did is right, but when two completely balls-out, aggressive human beings are redlining, those delicate psycho switches inside both of their heads take next to nothing on getting switched on (ain't that right, Mark?). But it often happens, as in this case. Some would say that Roseboro spring-boarded the violent situation with "pegging the ball back to the mound." Others would say that Marichal shouldn't have swung the bat. In either case, both sides seemed like they were on the verge of seeing red, and after the crack upon the scalp of Roseboro with Marichal's bat, all hell broke loose on the field with the "helping fists" of both teams' players. Needless to say, Juan was fined \$1,750 and suspended for

GIANTS

juan marichal • pitcher



(Above) Designated Dale's favorite Juan Marichal card. He bought it for fifty bucks at a card show from a guy who swears it's real.

eight days. A slap on the wrist by today's standards, sure, but think about it — this was 1965, folks — ball players then never even dreamed of being overpaid, multi-millionaire athletes like they are today, for fuck's sake, not to mention the presence of the modern-day shitbag lawyer (not you, Katie — you are our kickass 1%-er) who exists on the money of unjust lawsuits, ala Johnny Cochran (whom I pray one day soon gets gang raped by Adolf Hitler and Co. while burning in hell with O.J. Simpson). After Juan was slapped his fine and suspension, the Dodgers went on to win the 1965 NL pennant by two games over the Giants, who ended up in second place. Talk about salt in the frickin' wound.

Many of those involved in pro baseball believed that, since Marichal missed his two turns for his team's pitching rotation, his suspension probably cost the Giants the NL pennant that year.

Even after Marichal apologized to Roseboro, and they eventually became good friends, it seemed that the sports writers covering baseball never really forgot about the incident. Or forgave him, for that matter. As the time and playing seasons went on the next few years, Marichal went on to wow fans and stoke the fires of his success, including the time he was a twenty-five-game winner in 1966, pocketing twenty-six games later on in 1968, then moving on to bag over twenty games for the sixth time in his career in 1969, not to mention the eight all-star games he pitched in during his days as a Giant, allowing only one earned run in eighteen innings. But in all these past years leading to this, Juan never received one single vote for the Cy Young Award, the pitcher's equivalent to the Nobel Prize. Typical fucking industry blackballers. If it isn't the sack-lacking, pussy-ass blackballing

from the wads in the music or motion picture industries, it's from the same species of wads in the sports industries.

But the Roseboro incident was to shadow Marichal even after he left the beloved world of baseball itself. He ended his shit-kicking fifteen-year career with the kind of stats any pitcher would envy. By the time Marichal threw his last pitch and retired in 1973, he had pitched fifty shutouts, struck out two hundred batters or more six times, won 243 games (more than pitchers Sandy Koufax, Don Drysdale, or Bob Gibson) and racked up a winning percentage higher than that hotshot Cy Young himself. Still later, in his first two years of being eligible, Marichal was denied entry into the be-all-end-all of baseball, the Hall of Fame. Can you fucking say "blackballing" again? The obvious couldn't be ignored, so finally, on January 12, 1983, the membership of the Baseball Writers Association of America quit being sissies about the situation and got their shit together. Juan Marichal, #27, became the 180th player to be inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. Strange as it would seem to most, Juan never complained about being overlooked in 1981 and 1982

(but I can guess Giants fans were slightly pissed, to say the least). He had said on numerous occasions publicly that he believed that the Roseboro incident didn't keep him outside the Hall (and if you believe that, o' gullible one....), and would suggest, "Some sports writers just have very high standards." Gotta love that. Why argue about it in public or anywhere else? Right on. I gotta say, Juan sure did handle it the right way — embrace the situation with humility and bide the time — because he and the fans knew exactly why the hell he waited for two years to get into the Hall. The same fucking meddling that happened with the Cy Young Award he never attained (but Marichal fans know damn well that he's got one coming).

Juan "Dominican Dandy" Marichal currently resides in his native land these days, where a baseball stadium he funded stands, and he hosts many charity golf tournaments. I'm hoping one of these days he'll come to the states and do a meet-and-greet for the fans. What would I like him to sign? Take a guess — "Beat on the brat, beat on the brat, beat on the brat with a ..."

I'm Against It
—Designated Dale
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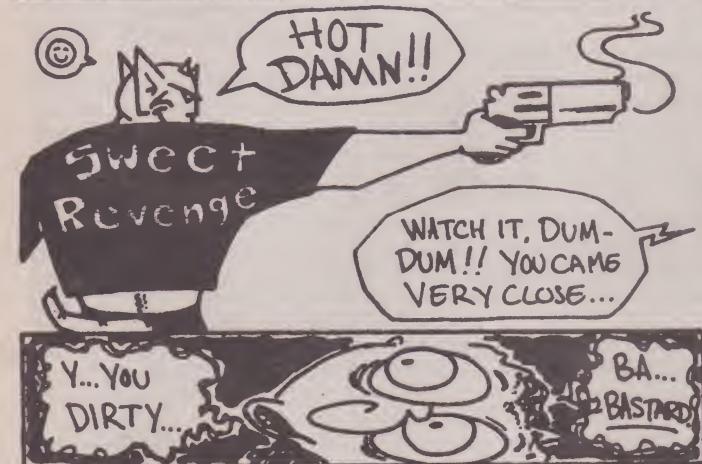
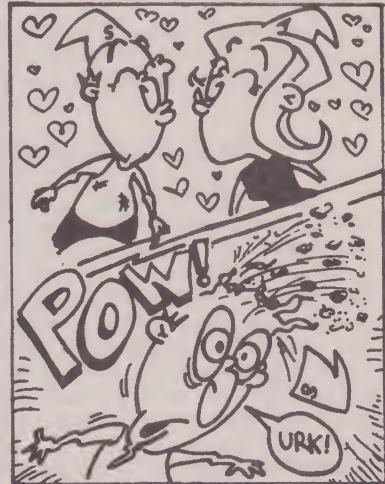
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BACK ISSUES: We have very limited amounts of Number 1 with Fat Mike on the cover, #2 (Crowd cover), #3 (Duane Peters cover)*4 (Ian Mackaye cover), #5 (Super Chinchilla Rescue Mission), and #6 (Howard Zinn and Good Riddance cover). All are \$3 ppd. in US. Capture the heady "back in the day" of Jan. 2001. Woo!





Of the 350,000 trucks eventually used by the motorized German army, roughly one-third were made by Ford.

HISTORY ISN'T OVER – HENRY FORD AND THE NAZIS

"All propaganda has to be popular and has to accommodate itself to the comprehension of the least intelligent of those whom it seeks to reach." (1)

DEARBORN GESTAPO

I was zoning out with the stereo blaring, the TV on mute, waiting for the commercials to end and wrestling to come back on, and it hit me: Patriotism. Commerce. On the surface, there's a big, basic implied link. If you buy American, you're supporting America. America is good. The more different a culture is from ours, the more suspect it becomes. The more potentially terrorist. It sounds warm and fuzzy and red and white and blue. It sounds simple and should work as simply as a light switch. I turned my attention away from the TV and picked up a zine that was basically a list of opinions. The writer made the assertion that people who owned foreign cars had no right to fly American flags. Baseball, apple pie, and American-made cars.

Huh. Buying something American makes you more of an American? Is it really that easy? A sliding scale?

Wrestling came back on. Necks bulged, flashpots erupted, tables broke, many a souplex and ankle lock were applied. Loud, funny words were exchanged. Eyebrows were raised high. Acting abilities remained low. Battles raged in the squared circle by men with steroid-developed forehead muscles. Usually, I'd be beered up by then, cheering along with the bodyslams. Yet, I still wondered about America. Why does buying specific shit equal patriotism for so many folks? Maybe because it's quite possibly the easiest route – buy a little flag, strap it to the car, let it flap itself to shreds, shake your fist at Bin Laden's grainy, turbaned head on the tube, and call it a day.

I know I've said it before, and I'll say it again: I unabashedly love America. It's relatively harder to get shot by a death squad here. Usually, when I flick a switch, a light comes on. When I flush, poo is gone. Stores carry plentiful supplies of cold alcohol at 2 AM. The roads are more paved than dirt. Libraries are plentiful. I can listen to all the records I want to. I can watch wrestling in my comfy chair once a week and let all semblance of thought leave my head. I cherish these things. Seriously. I don't take them for granted. Since I'm such an horrible capitalist, (Malls make me rashy. Shopping makes me irritable.) what makes America so great is that some of the best patriots – Emma Goldman, Martin Luther King, Jr., Benjamin

Franklin – questioned the fuck out of what it is to be an American. They peeled back its skin and beat out its true character against the anvils of fairness, equality, and progress (one got killed and one was deported, but hey). They often flat-out disagreed with popular sentiment.

Then I got to thinking. Okay, I'll use the "logic" that buying American instantly improves one's patriotic karma and see where it takes me. Sounds simple enough. I decided to look at the American company – Ford – whose founder perfected assembly line mass production. Its main offices are still located in Dearborn, Michigan. Ford is a company that symbolizes America. It has a very strong brand identity and image. They're the company that makes the Oscar Meyer Wienermobile, for crying out loud. The idea that Ford is a dutiful icon for American patriotism gets shaky quick. Ford owns 33% of Japan's Mazda and 10% of South Korea's Kia. So, is the Mazda owner only 1/3 as patriotic as a "real" Ford owner? Patriotism-wise, will one have to buy ten Kias to equal one Ford?

Under the company Premier Automotive Group, Ford also owns the car-making part of Volvo, has owned Jaguar since 1989, and oversees the sales, marketing, communications, franchise development, parts, distribution, and customer service efforts of the rest of Ford's premier brands, which include Range Rover and Aston Martin. Are well-heeled folks driving once-Swedish and British manufactured cars now more patriotic since their fancy cars are made by a company owned in the good ol' US of A?

Okay, what about the fact that the majority of Fords are built in completely different countries like Mexico, Brazil, Ireland, Germany, and Portugal, and shipped to the United States? What's the patriotic percentage there? Is there a chart I can reference?

It is true that the motor vehicle industry is America's largest manufacturing industry, (2) and it does hire a lot of people – Ford alone employs around 345,000 people worldwide – so it is important to respect that it is an enormous element of America's economy. Perhaps this is what makes some citizens go so far as having little Calvin (of *Calvin and Hobbes* fame) stickers on their Fords, peeing on a Toyota (or chose your import) logo. For a moment, let's pretend that Ford is solely an American company that supports American workers, made for American folks. Maybe Ford has been so good to the American populace that they're basking in the glow of their good deeds and fair treatment of their workers and that's why people defend them so vehemently. Or perhaps it is something else entirely. People who buy Fords directly equate

their vehicle purchase with directly putting stock into America and that's why people are so quick to conjoin Ford and Americana into the same ideal.

HOW'S IT FEEL TO BE REDUNDANT?

"The broad masses of a population are more amenable to the appeal of rhetoric than to any other force." (3)

A week later, I was sitting in a doctor's office lobby, reading a short story about trafficking body parts in ice chests when the TV announced that Ford was in the process of eliminating 35,000 jobs worldwide in 2002, and closing five plants. I picked up a newspaper off the floor. A Ford spokesman referred to 21,500 American workers as "redundancies." GM and Chrysler planned 26,000 cuts apiece. In other words, classic corporate bulimia (some may say corporate terrorism) – the tendency for large companies to seesaw between mass hirings and massive layoffs. (4)

A little bit of recent history; In 1999, Ford reported a \$7.2 billion net income. To put this into perspective, this automobile manufacturer made more in profit than the Gross Domestic Product of the countries Haiti and Honduras combined. (5) Just since 1990, two-thirds of the vehicles on the road were replaced by new ones. It was a decade of record sales and record profits for the Big Three automakers – Ford, General Motors and Daimler Chrysler. In 2000, Ford alone made 5.7 million vehicles. Crunching the numbers, 1 out of every 1,000 people on the face of the planet purchased a Ford vehicle that year. (6) Since Fords are sold in more than two hundred nations and territories world-wide – according to the "buying from an American-owned company means you're a good American," theory – that's a lot of de-facto patriots all over the world.

SMASH HITS

"History is more or less bunk."
-Henry Ford

In 2001, the bubble burst. In one financial quarter, Ford lost \$752 million, largely due to wrongful death lawsuits and the cost of replacing thirteen million defective Firestone tires equipped on what was then the best selling SUV in America, the Ford Explorer. (7) The more than ninety deaths linked to Firestone tread separations and the media attention that ensued fucked up Ford's profit margin. Ford, used to the occasional snafu, tried to sweep the lawsuits in the direction of the Pinto. In 1973, in an intra-

executive Ford memo, Ford engineers discovered in lab tests that if the Pinto was involved in a rear-end collision, the car would explode. Instead of recalling the Pinto and fixing the fuel tank, at \$11 per auto, because it would be "too cost prohibitive," Ford put a price on human life. \$200,000. (8) They then calculated that those were acceptable potential human losses and decided not to do a recall. Ford decided it would be cheaper to settle with survivors. It was. People dying was a bummer side-effect, but Ford's profit margin in the mid-70s remained strong. Ford was sued for murder in court, but were not found guilty.

In 2002, while they closed down plants in the United States, William Clay Ford Jr., Ford's current CEO, sympathized with laid-off workers: "We realize that some of the things that must be done will be painful. I can't begin to describe how sorry I am about that." Interestingly, he didn't mention that on January 24th, two weeks after the announced cuts, Ford inaugurated its \$10 billion Design and Research Center in Taiwan. (9) Nor did he mention the \$1.2 billion it invested in the 700,000 square foot Project Amazon factory in Camacari, Brazil that it opened two months prior, in October, 2001. (10)

Okay, I'm smart enough to understand the nature of corporations. Corporations are artificial and inhuman entities created with a single purpose in mind – to generate a profit. All other activities are incidental. The central enterprise is to make as much money as possible. The corporate creed is bare-knuckled capitalism, a cornerstone of what American commerce (and what many people mistake for patriotism) is wholeheartedly geared toward. Acquiring wealth is the sole reason for a corporation's existence. A little bit of older history: In 1903, Ford Motor Company signed its articles of incorporation. Within one year, it received its charter to do business in Canada. Within five years, it opened a sales branch in Paris. In 1913, it signed a contract to sell its Model T in China, Indonesia, Siam, and Dutch East Indies. Twelve years after its inception, it had made one million cars. Except in commercials and public relations pamphlets, phrases like "business ethics" and "corporate conscience" are oxymorons. To take this attitude to its extreme, firms themselves can feel neither pity nor remorse. Perhaps the people working for the firms can have emotion, but that almost becomes irrelevant when positioned against the bottom line.

Let's take a step back: Ethnically close-minded people will be quick to shake a finger at "immigrants," and heap fault on "America's demise" on people that have different skin color or adopt different social mores. Yet, "easy patriots" put their hard-earned dollars into a large

multi-national company. Perhaps they do have a point, since most of the people of different skin colors doing the hands-on work for multi-national companies such as Ford outside of America are basically slaves, that the logic works in a roundabout way. A more pertinent question that arises from this is: can there be a dividing line between ally and enemy when the only language is money? If patriotism is spending American money on American products, what happens when that American company's actions make it a verifiable traitor to the very rhetoric it espouses?

Am I picking on people who drive Fords? No. I could give a shit. Am I picking on the

meet a man who would revolutionize the mechanized world.

At high levels, he led a dark enterprise.

'DOLF AND HANK'S MUTUAL APPRECIATION CLUB

"What luck for rulers
that men do not think." (12)
"Henry Ford tradition preys on idle
minds." –NOFX, "Dig"

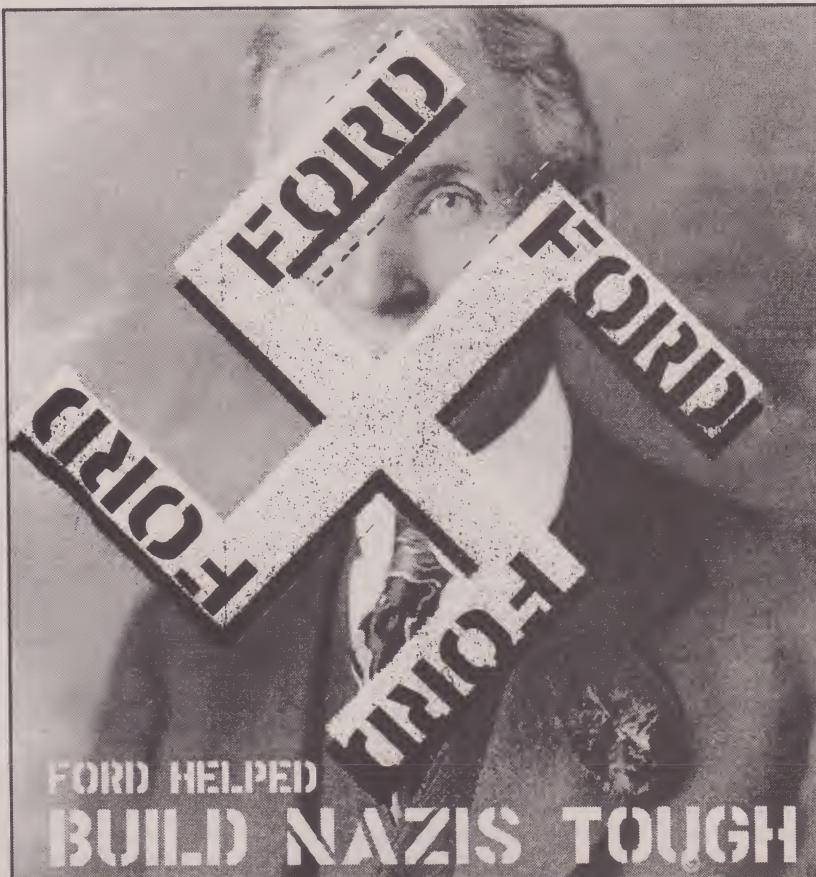
Henry Ford's loyalties were to Ford Motor Company. He was an international businessman dedicated to building a global empire.

Ruthlessly efficient and unparalleled in effectiveness, he was looking to reap huge financial awards in emerging foreign markets. Like a seasoned porn star, Henry Ford knew how to massage a couple of very large customers with both hands while simultaneously looking directly into the camera with doe-eyed sincerity. He succeeded. But at what cost?

I'm going to go out on a limb here and say I think that Nazis suck. I just don't like 'em. They've done a lot of bad, bad things. If you disagree with this basic opinion, you're probably not going to see any conflict of interest.

Adolf Hitler admired the hell out of Henry Ford. In 1930 he told the *Detroit News*, "I regard Henry Ford as my inspiration."

Henry Ford owned *The Dearborn Independent*, a paper that hit its peak of popularity with a circulation of 700,000. It first attacked Jews in its May 22, 1920 issue and continued to do so in ninety-one subsequent editions. Ford, an outspoken anti-Semite, reprinted the articles in four paper-bound



workers at Ford? Hell no. Am I saying that any other car manufacturer is better? Not necessarily. All I'm saying is that if you bang the gong of patriotism by buying some durable goods that isn't a "rice burner," it just rings very hollow.

I asked myself a simple question: Why the fuck have I never heard about the Ford/Hitler connection before? I'm usually up on stuff like this. So I asked around. Most people had heard a whisper here or there, but no one could give me the full story. Because corporations rarely release their internal documentation until they're under governmental investigation, it's next to impossible to know what's going on at Ford today. Ford of America was privately held until 1956, and the company refuses to make its balance sheets available from that period, and have declined requests for access to their wartime archives (11). Because of this, most of information on Ford is from companies and governments that it dealt directly with over the past ninety years. There's a lot of information available. It just took some poking around. So let's take a stroll down the cobble streets to

volumes, collectively called *The International Jew, The World's Foremost Problem* (13) The book is hard to read. It includes hum dingers like: "Sheer analysis in the interest of mental health would compel the Jewish people to abandon the darkness which holds them now"; and "If 'fans' wish to know the trouble with American baseball, they have it in three words – too much Jew." The book was translated into twelve languages. Henry Ford quickly became one of the largest, earliest donors to the struggling and obscure radical Nazi Party. Realize that around 1922, the Nazi party was relatively small, with a membership of approximately 6,000 people. Ford and Hitler's knowledge and support of one another began almost a full twenty years before the outbreak of World War II. During his lifetime, Ford never denied he had bankrolled the führer and that he gave him annual birthday gifts of 50,000 Deutsch marks. (14) On December 20th, 1922, six days after running a story calling Hitler the "Bavarian Mussolini," The *New York Times* reported, "The wall beside his desk in Hitler's private office is

decorated with a large picture of Henry Ford. In the antechamber there is a large table covered with books, nearly all of which are translations of books written and published by Henry Ford.” (15)

The next year, Henry Ford was considering a run for the American presidency. Hitler, then the leader of the fledgling Nazi Party, told the *Chicago Tribune*, “I wish that I could send some of my shock troops to Chicago and other big cities to help.” (16) When Hitler’s first attempted takeover of Germany’s national leadership failed and he was captured, the vice president Auer of the Bavarian Diet testified, “Herr Hitler openly boasts of Mr. Ford’s support and praises Ford as a great individualist and a great anti-Semite.” Between 1925 and 1927, while in jail, Hitler, with the help from his chauffeur, penned his autobiography, a book that would become the template for the Third Reich: *Mein Kampf*. Hitler singled out only one American for praise. On Henry Ford, he wrote: “It is Jews who govern the stock exchange forces in the American Union. Every year makes them more and more the controlling masters of the producers in a nation of one hundred and twenty millions; only a single man, Ford, to their fury, still maintains full independence.”

In 1927, Ford Motor Co. Aktiengesellschaft (A.G.) set up shop in Germany when it opened an office in Berlin. A year later, Henry Ford merged his forty percent of Ford Motor A.G. of Germany assets with I.G. Farben, a huge chemical corporation (a company that would be responsible for producing an overwhelming percentage of explosives for the Nazi war effort along with 95 percent of German poison gas, including all the Zyklon B gas used in the concentration camps.). (17) In 1930, Henry Ford himself laid the foundation stone for the Cologne plant on a 68-acre site, which became its German headquarters. (18)

To prove that he was an equal opportunity employer, in the 1930s also Ford built the Soviet Union’s first modern automobile plant in Gorki, capable of making 100,000 vehicles a year, and made the Russian military bike, nicknamed the Molotov (IMZs and KMZs, technically). (19)

By 1935 German Ford became the second-largest producer of trucks for the Wehrmacht (the German army), after GM/Opel (Opel was a 100% GM-owned subsidiary.) Ford vehicles were crucial to the revolutionary Nazi military strategy of blitzkrieg – literally, “lightning war.” (20) Of the 350,000 trucks eventually used by the motorized German army, roughly one-third were made by Ford. Subsidiaries of Ford and GM built approximately 90% of all armored “mautlifter” three-ton tracked trucks. (21)

According to the National Archives, American Ford agreed to a complicated barter deal that gave the Reich increased access to large quantities of strategic raw materials, notably rubber, to keep its plants at full production.

In 1938, a car was built at Ford’s Cologne factory every three minutes. The plant operated at full capacity months before the Nazi invasion of Czechoslovakia. On his 75th birthday, Henry Ford was awarded the Grand Cross of the German Eagle, (22) the Nazi regime’s highest honor for “foreign nationals who made themselves deserving to the Third Reich.” It was the first time the Grand Cross had been awarded to a United States citizen. Not so surprisingly, this **RAZORCAKE** (20) medal was also awarded to Italy’s

dictator Benito Mussolini and Japan’s Emperor Hirohito. Surprisingly, Charles Lindbergh (who was the first person to fly non-stop across the Atlantic Ocean in *The Spirit of St. Louis*, and who later became an advisor to Henry Ford at his B-24 plant), James Mooney (General Motor’s chief executive for overseas operations), and Thomas J. Watson (CEO of IBM) (23) were also awarded medals by the Nazis. (24) To return the favor, the next year, in celebration of Hitler’s 50th birthday, and giving future genocide a shot in the arm, Henry Ford publicly gave the gift of 35,000 Reichmarks to Adolf.

At the outbreak of World War II, Ford and General Motors controlled 70 percent of the German car market. (25) According to the US Army report of 1945, German Ford began producing vehicles of a strictly military nature for the Reich even before the war began. Following Hitler’s invasion of Poland (which set off World War II), German Ford remained one of the largest suppliers of vehicles to the Wehrmacht. (26) The company was selling to the SS and the police as well. Even though I scoured and scoured, I could not find any direct evidence that Ford itself made tanks for the Reich. (27) It did, however, make half-tracks, which were equipped with anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles and high caliber machine guns. GM, verifiably, made tanks through Opel.

Still, in April 1940 Ford maintained complete control of the German subsidiary. Two of its top executives sat on the subsidiary’s board. (28) That June, German armies occupied France, a US ally. Nonetheless, Ford’s local managers cut a deal with the occupation authorities that allowed the German company to resume production, “solely for the benefit of Germany and countries under its rule.” This was at a time when Germany had taken two million Frenchmen prisoner. In a letter penned shortly after France’s surrendered, Maurice Dollfus, a Ford director in France since 1929, assured the Ford headquarters in Dearborn that “we will benefit from the main fact of being a member of the Ford family, which entitles us to better treatment from our German colleagues who have shown clearly their wish to protect the Ford interest as much as they can.” He was right. Dollfus disclosed that profits from this German business were at 1.6 million francs by 1941.

While Ford Motor enthusiastically worked for the Reich, the company initially resisted calls from President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Churchill to increase war production for the Allies. Henry Ford refused a government contract in June of 1940 to build Rolls Royce aircraft engines for England. (29)

By 1941, Ford of Germany had stopped manufacturing passenger vehicles and was devoting its entire production capacity to military trucks. Today, Ford’s U.S. headquarters maintains it was not responsible for German operations after its assets were seized in 1941. Present-day Ford points to the fact that in that year, its main Cologne plant appointed a majority-German board of directors (neglecting to mention that Americans were still on the board), upon which it took on the more Aryan-appropriate moniker, Ford Werke, and that it operated autonomously. In March of 1941, Ford issued new stock in the plant and sold it exclusively to Germans, reducing American Ford’s share to fifty-two percent (fifty-two percent is still a controlling American percentage, mind you). Ford

competitors wanted its business, yet when the Nazi’s Ministry of Economy debated whether to seize the opportunity to demand German majority of Ford Werke, they gave up the idea. Why? Because Ford’s factory was so tightly run, too efficient at producing the Axis arsenal – better, the mucky mucks of the Nazis supposed – than even they could do themselves. Plus, in a letter to the Reich Commission for Enemy Property, relinquishing the American majority would compromise “the importance of the company for obtaining raw materials,” the “excellent sales organization in Europe,” as well as “insight into American production methods.” They want as far to state, “There could be no doubt about the complete incorporation as regards to personnel and organization.” (30) In the direct words of my grandpa, “If it ain’t broke, don’t break it.”

FORD GETS ITS WAR ON

“Money is the root of all evil, unless used for good purpose.” –Henry Ford

Although retroactively deplorable, it’s possible to understand but not agree with the fact that Henry Ford was playing both sides – the Allies (Britain, France, USSR) and the Axis (Germany, Italy, Japan) – against the middle. He wanted to make vehicles. He wanted to make money anywhere he possibly could. Ford himself had more in common and certainly liked Hitler more than he did President Franklin Roosevelt, whom he saw as one step away from being a socialist, which he openly abhorred in *The Dearborn Independent*. In the late ‘30s, Ford consistently resisted pressure from Roosevelt to convert some of his US factories to weapons production. Up until that time, no official war had been declared between Germany and America. America was still officially isolationist. But that was soon to change.

Late in January, 1942, Ford America was informed that Ford’s operations had the highest vehicle production level of all French manufacturers... for the Nazi war machine. Ford of France had had a very slim profit margin in peacetime and paid out only one dividend in its history, yet its diligent service to the Third Reich quickly changed that. Subsequently, these Ford-produced vehicles were used against American soldiers as they landed in France, during D-Day and the invasion of Normandy in 1944.

Before Dearborn’s supposed lack of contact six months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, in May, 1942, the Superior Court of Cologne put Ford Werke in what’s called a “trusteeship” – the legal title to Ford Werke’s property was entrusted to use for the Nazi’s benefit – ruling that Ford was “under authoritative enemy influence.” However, unlike most American facilities in Germany, Ford was not taken over by the German government during the war. Robert Schmidt, a lifelong Ford employee, was so successful in converting the Cologne plant to war production that the Nazi regime gave him the title of Military Economic Leader. (31) Hitler’s Chancellery in Berlin put in a good word for the man. The official wrote, there was “no reason to appoint a special custodian for the enterprise.” Ford’s own man was a Nazi’s Nazi. He was so good he was eventually appointed to oversee Ford plants in Axis-occupied Belgium, Holland, and Vichy, France. (32) Apparently, when Henry Ford stated, “We hire a man, not his history,” he still didn’t speak ill of those

with large capacities for Nazi sympathy. After the war, Schmidt was re-hired by Ford America in 1950 along with six key Ford Werke executives of the Nazi era. (33)

During WWII, the Vichy plant – in what was then German-occupied France – was bombed several times by the Allies. It had also been damaged during the German invasion of France. The Nazis, before the fall of their regime, had given Ford Werke about \$104,000 in compensation for accidental damage. Ford also received 38 million francs from the Vichy government for bombing damages done to the Poissy plant. (34)

Twenty years later, unhappy with the money bestowed upon it from two governments, Ford asked the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States for an additional seven million dollars to compensate for damage sustained during Allied bombing raids. Let's make this clear – Ford was asking for money because their factory, which was busy making vehicles for the Nazi armed forces, was bombed by the Allies. Commission attorney Zvonko Rode pointed this fact out. Ford's attorney did not dispute it. Regardless, the commission awarded Ford \$1.1 million dollars. (35) If Ford had really already lost its factory to the Germans, how could it claim damages on a plant that it did not own? It just doesn't make sense. Even stranger, Hitler blocked the export of capital from Germany. Foreign money and foreign materials were welcome during the war and many foreign companies were encouraged to re-invest in their German operations. However, during the war, Ford Werke set aside payments due to Ford America and paid them after the war. (36)

Although Ford Werke's plant in Cologne claims its US head office lost contact with its German operations before the US entered the war in December 1941 and regained control only seven years later, Ford Motor Company (USA) owned 55 to 90% of the shares of its subsidiary Ford Werke. A.G. Edsel Ford (Henry Ford's son) and Robert Sorenson, a high-ranking official of Ford, served as directors of Ford Werke A.G. throughout the Nazi Third Reich. (37) Sales increased by more than half between 1938 and 1943, and, according to a report found at the National Archives, the value of the German subsidiary more than doubled during the course of the war. (38) To further sully the enterprise, in the late 1990s, Ford acknowledged that Ford-Werke AG used Buchenwald concentration camp labor to build trucks and light armored vehicles in Cologne. (39) Fifty percent of Ford Werke's workers were slave laborers, mostly non-German, comprised of foreign captives including French, Russians, Ukrainians, and Belgians. (40) This was at exactly the same time that Ford operated the Willow Run Plant in Michigan, which was to build 8,600 bombers, 278,000 jeeps, and 57,000 aircraft

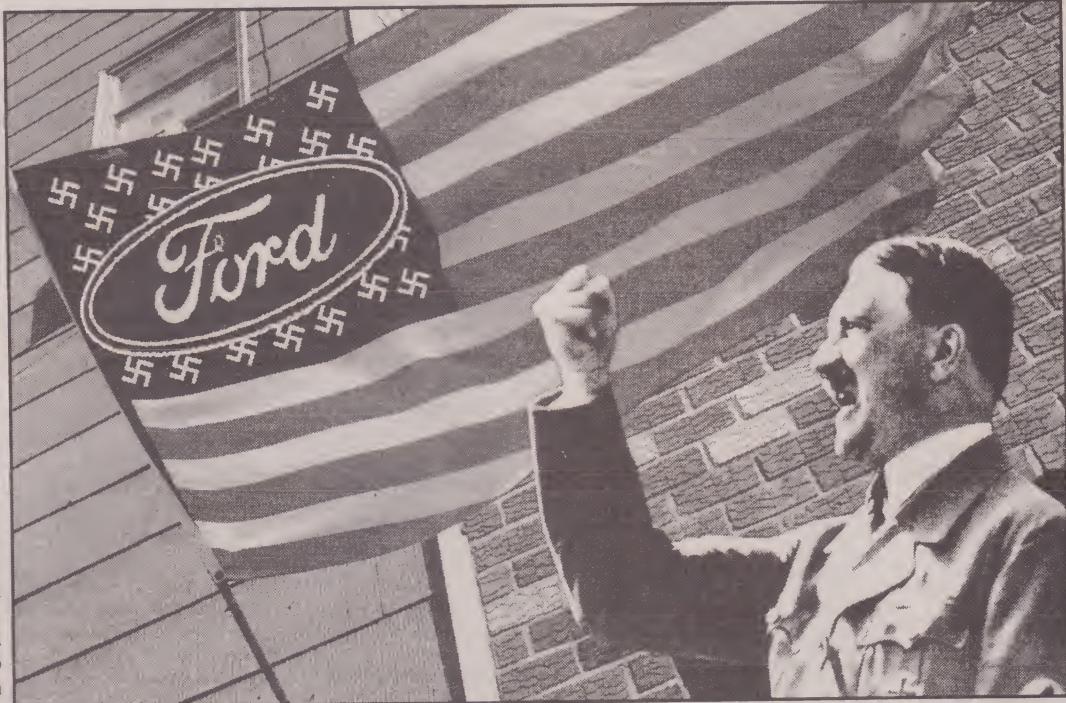
engines for the American military.

Apparently, patriotism's a nice tool that bankers and businessmen use to help control the poor. Let's put this into perspective. On February 19, 1942, as President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which resulted in the forcible internment in America of 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry. More than two-thirds of those interned under the Executive Order were citizens of the United States, and none had ever shown any disloyalty, yet titans of industry with known, provable ties to America's enemy were never incarcerated for their involvement with the Third Reich. It almost gets to the point that through a provable pattern of subsidy and political manipulation, American armed forces were told not attack viable military targets because they were

IS PATRIOTISM MERELY A CHEERING SECTION? OR IT'S ALL RIGGED, MAN

"Your enemies are nothing like you and peace has a price for those who lose."
—Dillinger Four, "Thanks for Nothing, Part II: The Revenge"

Let's go back to wrestling. What I thoroughly enjoy about professional wrestling is the fact that it openly announces itself as fake, as "sports entertainment." And in knowing so, it's a lot easier to see how it internally works – why bad guys do what they do, how the commentators hedge their praise or condemnation, and to know that even though the wrestlers aren't ultimately fighting to hurt one another or



When Henry Ford was considering a run for the American presidency, Hitler, told the Chicago Tribune, "I wish that I could send some of my shock troops to Chicago and other big cities to help."

owned and operated by Ford. Ludicrous? At the Nuremberg War Crime Trials, no American board members of Ford Werke were placed on trial. (41) According to the United States Strategic Bombing Survey (42), in the last half of 1944, German truck production was attacked. Three plants produced most of Germany's truck supply. The Opel plant was knocked out completely, never to recover. Daimler Benz was similarly eliminated. Ford at Cologne was not attacked. According to B-24 logs, the plant was slated for bombing on October 15th but cloud cover impeded good bombing. It was suspiciously never rescheduled for attack. One would think that a factory responsible for one third of all enemy trucks would be a hot-shit target. It received solely incidental bombing damage and resumed peacetime production immediately following the war. In 1948, Henry Ford visited Cologne to celebrate the 10,000th truck to roll off its postwar assembly line.

get a belt with a honkin' piece of metal in it to wrap around their waists, there's an incredible amount of athleticism involved. It's a fantasy. Yet, while "serious" folks are willing to condemn such base activities as below them, saying that the outcomes are predetermined, that they're above sweaty, grunting men. I posit this: if one is so eager to dismiss professional wrestling, why not see that essentially the same rhetorical and physical forces are at work in our national political parties and in the relations between nations? (Although the outcome of a WWF match doesn't have enormous political, social, and economic consequences that affect the powerless, how it is run has more than just a passing semblance and overlapping interior logic with America's national political structure.) It's all rigged. All sides are controlled by a very select cadre of owners, which in turn are controlled by the hopes of making the largest wad of cash imaginable. This is what I find disconcerting. Henry Ford, a mechanically brilliant, bigoted man beat the **RAZORCAKE** 

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Skater: Dan Drehobl

American government at its own economic game. He made capitalism eat patriotism whole and helped to enable a war that resulted in the death of millions of people. Then he told the American government that even though he was responsible for making its sworn enemy's arsenal that they better not fucking bomb his plants. It's next to impossible to unearth if Roosevelt chose not to bomb Ford's main plant, or if he was warned not to, but one fact is indisputable: not only did America comply, it never brought the subject up again, preferring to let it slide and then retroactively pay him for damages.

Don't think that ever since the fall of the

Nazis that Ford suddenly started saying, "Oh, dude, we should be moral." Right now, hundreds, if not thousands, of companies are benefiting from *both* sides of wars (there's one in Afghanistan, one brewing between Pakistan and India, and American troop movements into Somalia again). It's happening right now. It's happening all over the world. It's just not getting any coverage. It's a heist. It's a ruse. If you think that big business has changed or suffered one bit, think again. It's just gotten more powerful.

Uhm, so yeah, harping on someone, saying they're not patriotic because driving a foreign car with an American flag flapping out of it is

a real ignorant thing to say. There is no such thing as a purely American car, or a purely foreign car, for that matter. Furthermore, the whole concept of a purely American company, excluding mom and pop operations, is pretty much bunk.

-Retodd

Additional stuff to look at and read so you can verify I'm not making this up:

- Michael Moore, *Roger and Me*.
- *Facts and Fascism*, by George Seldes
- *Wall Street and the Rise of Hitler*, by Antony C. Sutton
- *Hitler's Willing Executives*, by John Friedman



Retrod

Endnotes:

- 1: Adolf Hitler
- 2: <http://larouchepub.com/other/2001/2849us_unempl.html>
- 3: Adolf Hitler
- 4: <www.autonews.com/news.cms?newsId=1329>
- 5: 1999, World Gross Domestic Product at Market Exchange Rates. Haiti: \$2.6 billion. Honduras: \$4.0 billion.
- 6: 2000 US Census Bureau estimates the world population at 6,080,141,683 for 2000.
- 7: <<http://www.wsfs.org/articles/2001/aug2001/jobs-a18.shtml>>
- 8: <<http://www.corpwatch.org/news/PRT.jsp?articleId=568>>
- 9: <<http://sg.yahoo.com/020123/36/2cms6.html>>
- 10: <<http://www.bizsites.com/2002/jan/transportation.html>>
- 11: <www.washingtonpost.com/wp-stv/national/daily/nov98/nazicars30.htm>
- 12: Adolf Hitler
- 13: <http://zog.to/3/antisemi/ij_ch1.html>
- 14: <http://www.bulldognews.net/issues_ford_slave_labor.html>
- 15: *New York Times*, Page 2, Column 8
- 16: *Trading with the Enemy: An Expose of the Nazi-American Money Plot 1933-1949*, by Charles Higham
- 17: <http://reformed-theology.org/html/books/wall_street/chapter_02.htm>
- 18: <http://www.local387.com/ford_historic_dates.htm>
- 19: http://reformed-theology.org/html/books/wall_street/chapter_06.htm
- 20: GM even made a truck called "Blitz."
- 21: <<http://past.thenation.com/issue/000124/0124silverstein.shtml>>
- 22: <www.washingtonpost.com/wp-stv/national/daily/nov98/nazicars30.htm>
- 23: *IBM and the Holocaust: The Strategic Alliance between Nazi Germany and America's Most Powerful Corporation*, by Edwin Black.
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- 25: <www.washingtonpost.com/wp-stv/national/daily/nov98/nazicars30.htm>
- 26: <http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Corporations/Ford_führer.html>
- 27: I only found circumstantial evidence, through a man named William Mooren, who stated that his father and grandfather fabricated parts for "Ford's panzer tank and 8.8 cm flak anti-aircraft guns." But could find no other evidence. <http://bulldognews.net/issues_ford_suit.html>
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Pog Mo Thon



...they all agreed few things could be more terrifying than a pissed off punk rock chick with the FM airwaves for a mouth piece.

The Discovery of America (Part III)

S.P.A.

(That Song on the Radio)

When the ceremony was over Spike and his followers brought their provisions into the van and drove out to find a place to give glory to Punk Rock and get as drunk as they could.

One day they heard a song on the radio that was familiar to their ears yet similar to everything else they heard on the radio. It sounded like a love song, but it was not a love song. It was an angry, bitter, mocking song about a piece of ass who didn't know he was a piece of ass. By the end of the song it was clear to all sixteen punks in the van it was a song about Spike, sung by Suzy Swallows, the leader of the all-girl band known as The Swallows.

It was called: "Stupid Piece of Ass."

Seany Rock turned off the radio. They drove on for many miles in silence.

Spike fell into a black mood.

Duck, who had a soft spot for girl bands, said:

"That song is a boner fide hit!"

Spike launched himself at Duck, and beat him about the face and neck with a Mag light until the brothers pulled their leader off him. They tried to calm him with the last of the beer, bourbon and rubber cement, but nothing would calm him, so great was Spike's rage. It took most of Jeff Boyardi's secret stash of valium before he finally passed out.

The punks assembled and, though they found Spike's sorrowful state amusing, they all agreed few things could be more terrifying than a pissed off punk rock chick with the FM airwaves for a mouth piece. They all agreed not to ever mention S.P.A. to Spike's face again.

When the leader of The Defeated awoke, he forbade Piker from playing the radio and they proceeded with great haste to the next RAZORCAKE 14 club. They drove for

three days and three nights without beer, weed or other comforts necessary for human life. They were all very distressed from the ill effects of sobriety. Spike most of all. Wienie Todd updated The Defeated's tour diary with a picture of a dead pigeon and re-cast The Swallows logo so that it read The Sellouts. This gave Spike some pleasure, but the sorrow in his heart was great for he was so totally sprung.

A Novel Idea

Even though he was just a roadie, Duck had dreams of punk rock superstardom. So he decided to write some songs and see if he could get them to Suzy, or possibly The Swallows drummer, Big Stuff, who was super fat and probably put out.

He took rip after rip off the glass pipe until he'd smoked all his speed. He scribbled in his notebook for a three hours, and then he scribbled for three hours more. When he was done, he had one song, the punk rock anthem to end all punk rock anthems. He showed it to Measles, who was picking off his scabs and lining them up on a jewel box. He hadn't decided what to do with them.

Duck handed the lyrics to Measles.

Measles read:

I would like to snort some solvents

I would like to occupy my time in a carefree manner

Everybody wants to snort some solvents

Everybody wants to occupy his or her time in a carefree manner!

Duck asked:

"What do you think?"

Measles said:

"I think it's the stupidest fucking song I've ever heard."

Duck said:

"You're just jealous."

Measles replied:

"I think you copied a Ramones song and changed the words."

To which Duck replied:

"I did not."

Measles answered:

"Did too."

This went on for a while until Seany Rock threw an empty bottle of Bushmills at them. The bottle hit both Duck and Measles in the head and upset the scabs lined up on the jewel case. Some of the scabs fell into a Morty's sleeping bag, some went into Barrett's tobacco pouch, and one landed on Jonaz's nose, but the violence enthusiast did not wake up.

That's when Measles and Duck decided to cool it.

Measles went to sleep.

Duck rubbed his head and read his lyrics over and over again. Maybe Measles was right. Maybe he wouldn't be a star after all. Maybe he'd never know the vapid joy of being a punk rock celebrity. Finally, he found what was wrong. He took up his pencil and added a final line:

Hey!

The dream was alive.

Trash Ass

The next day they found a nice little bar with a variety of beers on tap and various kinds of cheap food.

Spike said to The Defeated and those who had traveled with them:

"Jimmy has given us a comfort after our toil. Gather that which Jimmy has prepared for his righteous brethren."

So they did. When they drank the beer, however, the lead singer of The Defeated said to them:

"Brothers, take care that you do not drink too much, lest it lie heavily upon your bodies."

The band interpreted Spike's prescription in different ways. Some of them drank a few cups, others several, and the rest a veritable shitload. The last were overcome by the shits for three days and three nights, others for two days and two nights, the remainder for a day and a night. They could not travel and the leader of The Defeated tried unceasingly to reach Jimmy on his cell phone, but Jimmy was out of range.

One night on the can, Measles whispered to Morty in the stall next door:

"Do you believe in Jimmy?"

Morty replied:

"I don't know. Do you?"

To which Measles answered:

"Fuck no."

When the shit storm was over, the lead singer of The Defeated spoke to his companions:

"Brothers, let us flee from this threat to our asses lest something worse happen to us, like hemorrhoids. Jimmy has given us sustenance, but you did yourself damage with it. Let us leave this club then, and let us leave it now."

When they had loaded the van with all that, as the leader of The Defeated had ordered, they drove off and rolled out on the highway in a westerly direction.

What Both the Road Inspire?

When they arrived at a stopping place, they stopped for a while. The punks disembarked and staggered out of the van, each in his own fashion. There was a good deal of grumbling about the dearth of gigs, the long hours on the road, the stale sameness of their porno. Spike assembled the members of The Defeated and those who traveled with them. He said:

"Punk Rock has given us valor and strength. Blessed be Punk Rock!"

The punks sat silently, as was their custom when Spike was speaking. Spike repeated himself:

"I said: Blessed be Punk Rock!"

The punks roused themselves and said with one voice:

"Blessed be Punk Rock!"

Pleased, Spike went on:

"Brothers, all these many days and weeks we have been on the road, we have had many adventures and given much glory to Punk Rock. But we have also traveled far together and shared many long hours of nothingness. I have had many thoughts during these intervals. My brain has been brimming over with them and I wish to share with you now these innermost thoughts. I have arranged them in the form of a list. A catalog, if you will."

The punks rather wished he

wouldn't. They all recalled the day he recited Eighteen Interpretations of The Adolescents' Blue Album. Then there was the time he performed selections from Repo Man Sock Monkey Theater. And none of them could quite forget the excruciating tedium of The Imaginary Dream Journal of Ian McKaye: If I Named All the Ice Cream, which Spike had read from cover to cover.

Spike produced a long manuscript that comprised numerous cocktail napkins taped together. The punks prepared to deal with the ensuing boredom. Ape fell asleep. Barrett injected meth. Seany Rock drank whiskey until he saw angels in the treetops.

Spike cleared his throat and began to read:

"What doth the road inspire?"

Measles replied:

"I don't know, Spike."

Spike glared at Measles. Jonaz socked him in the eye and said:

"That was a rhetorical question, you dipshit."

To which Measles replied:

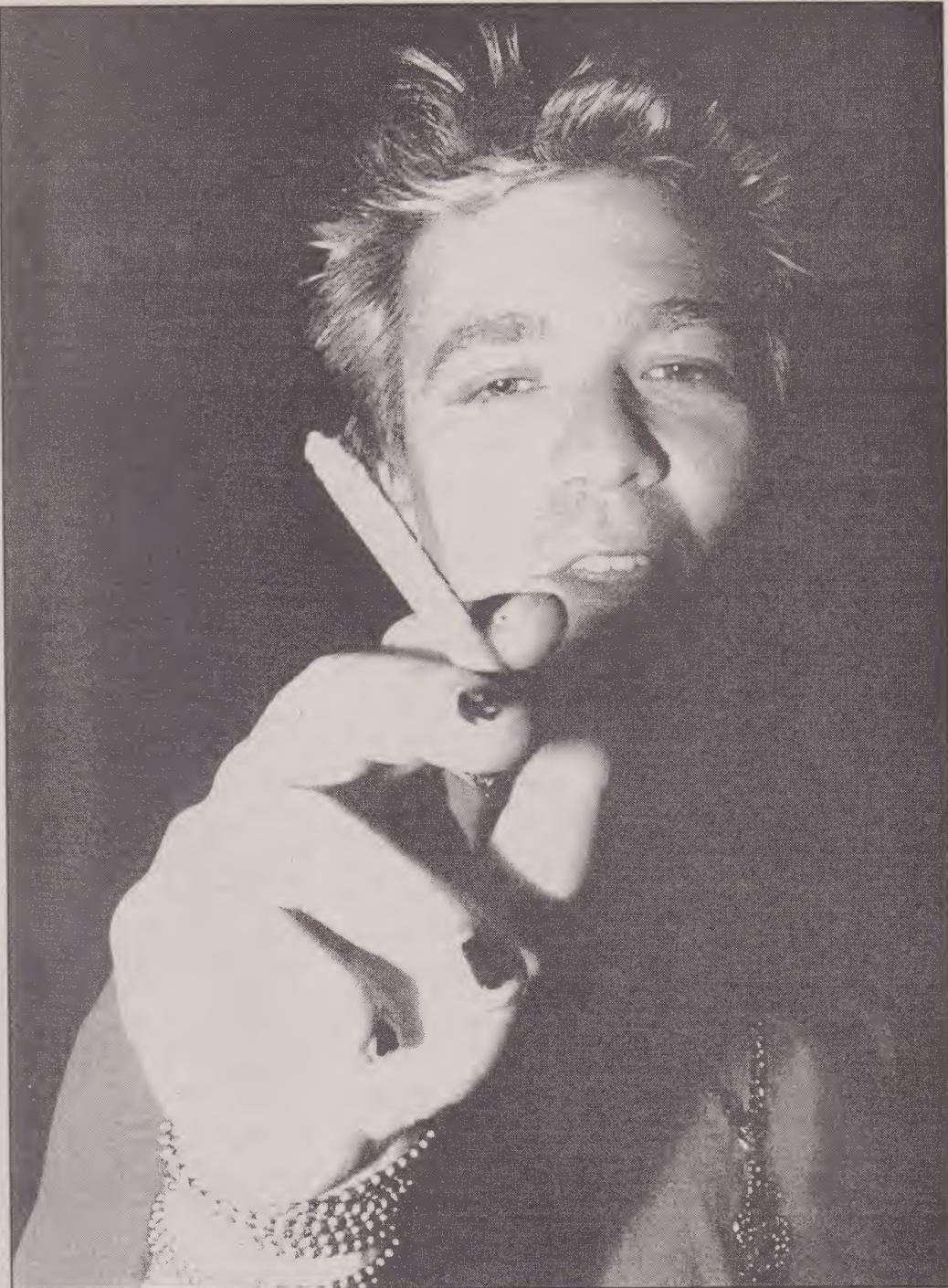
"Ow!"

And then:

"How was I supposed to know?"

Spike continued:

"What doth the road inspire? Assholeishness. Backseat copulation, navigation and irritation. Bad filmmaking. Beatniks. Bitching and moaning. Blowjobs. Blowouts. Boredom. Brake lights. Carjacking. Chase scenes. Collisions. Compulsive grooming. Confusion in small animals. Convoys. Cowgazing. Crashes. Creative pissing. Crime sprees. Cruising. Disappearances. Disgust with radio station play lists. Drunk driving. Erotic fantasies involving Manny, Moe, Jack and the redhead in the convertible at Mile Marker 9. Evel Knievelism. Family Vacation. Farting. Fender benders. Ferrari envy. Fits. Flat tires. Funeral processions. Gear grinding. Gloating among parents of honor students as if anyone anywhere really gives a fuck. Goofy faces in children. Graffiti artists. Gridlock. Gunplay. Hallucinations. Helplessness. Hitting and running, in a manner of speaking. Hitchhikers, real and imagined. Horn honking. Whore bonking. Hydroplaning. Indecision. Irrational animosity directed at buses, bicyclists, taxis, trash trucks, handicapped pedestrians and the elderly. Jack knifing. Journeys long and short. Kamikaze behavior among insects. Kidnapping. Lawsuits. Left arm farmer's tan. Listmaking. Masturbation. Migration in snowbirds, traveling salesmen and serial killers. Mnemonics involving license plates. Motion sickness. Nosepicking. Nostalgia. Noxious



Money

"Is there no one among us who isn't pilled-up, smoked-out, or wasted?"

gases. Overheating. Patience. Parades. Pileups. Possum casualties. Quarrels. Races. Rallies. Rage. Rear-ending. Recklessness, especially among uninsured aliens. Rubbernecking. Rush hour traffic. The secret lexicon of CB geeks. Sexual liaisons in motor lodges. Singing. Skidmarks. Sleeping. Speeding. Spinouts. Tailgating. Ten thousand unfunny queries regarding a sentient chicken's motivation for crossing same. That strange rattle. Turn signal amnesia. Unintended flights off of bluffs, bridges and

freeway overpasses. The unshakable certainty that while driving all night on desolate stretches of highway time ceases to exist altogether. Unsolicited information about one's traveling companions, including, but not limited to: anecdotes about co-workers, expressions of childhood regret, same-sex advances disguised as personal confessions, intimacy with unpleasant odors, and stories that if one ultimately has to "be there for" never should have been told in the fucking first place. U-turns. Urination. Vibrations, both

good and bad. Voyeurism. Wrong turns. X-ray vision fantasies while passing armored cars, limousines and tour buses. The zealous insistence that one is not lost when all evidence points to the contrary — but of all the things the road inspires, assholeishness most of all."

There was a prolonged period of silence. No one moved, no one stirred. Not a bung was loosened, not a beer can sloshed.

Finally, Measles spoke:
"What does 'doth' mean?"

A Distressing Scene

They looked for bathrooms, but there were no bathrooms. They looked for rest stops, but there were no rest stops. They looked for adult bookstores and found none. Just miles upon miles scrub-choked tableland everywhere they looked.

The singer of The Defeated said:

"This is a most distressing scene."

Seany Rock came up to the front of the van, to see what he could see. He said:

"I hate Texas."

Spike turned to Piker, who was nodding off behind the wheel, and said:

"Piker, where are we?"

Piker shrugged and ran over an armadillo.

"Let me see the map," Spike said.

Piker shrugged and ran over a rattlesnake.

"There is no map," he said. "Our destiny is not for us to decide."

This vexed Spike greatly. He said:

"Pull over."

Piker ran off the road and ran over a cactus plant. When the tumult in the van had subsided, the dust settled and beer cans righted, Spike turned to the driver and said:

"What the hell is wrong with you?"

Piker replied:

"I suffer the dementia of a nihilistic generation."

It was then Spike noticed the bottle protruding from Piker's coat. He was, it was now apparent, quite drunk.

Spike said to his vanmates:

"Is there no one among us who isn't pilled-up, smoked-out, or wasted?"

Skeebo raised his hand.

Spike was very happy to have found someone who wasn't incapacitated by drugs or alcohol.

"You, Skeebo, who have come with me to fight the good fight. Will you help us in this desperate hour by taking control of the van?"

"Fuck no," he said. "I'm frying on acid!"

Skeebo then proceeded to stare at his left hand as if he'd never seen anything quite so strange or beautiful.

A Distressing Scene, Redux

The van, therefore, sat still for twelve hours until Piker sobered up. Spike tried to reach Jimmy on his cell phone, but he could not get a signal. They were stuck in the middle of nowhere without a driver or a map.

When Piker was ready, they got underway once more. As they did not know which roads to take, they followed the sun west. At day's end, they had not left the featureless plain behind.

Spike said:

"What a most distressing scene."

Seany Rock replied:

"You already said that."

Now the Punk Rockers were hungry. They'd had no food for some time, and their speed was running dangerously low. The stench inside the van was all but unbearable.

Spike said to Piker:

"Steer for those mountains."

Morty looked up from his bedroll.

"Those aren't mountains," he said "they're clouds."

They argued about this until they became aware that the van was slowing.

Everyone fell silent. There was something in the road.

Spike said to his brothers:

"Behold! A message from Jimmy! Reflect on how Jimmy has subjected the savage beast under us without any inconvenience to our magnificent mission!"

Morty said to Measles:

"Huh?"

Spike continued:

"Salvation belongs to the Punk Rocker who has given us light. Appoint a holy day, with festal branches up to the horn of the altar."

The van stopped and Spike disembarked to investigate the sign. The members of The Defeated and those who traveled with them followed Spike onto the asphalt.

"What is it, Spike? We beseech you to tell us!"

Spike spoke. His appearance was greatly disordered. He seemed confused.

"It's a bottle," he said, "but there is no message."

Seany took the bottle from Spike. He said:

"This is the very same bottle we took from Piker yesterday! We're right back where we started!"

The punks prostrated themselves on the ground three times. They rent their own clothes and threw their bodies upon cactus plants. Then they read J. Crew catalogs.

When they confronted Piker, they saw that he was drunk again.

The Truth About Texas Law Enforcement

The next day, Spike and his companions drove out onto the highway and their van was carried along for forty hours. Around midday, there appeared to them a beast of immense size following close

behind as if it were about to devour them. When Measles saw this he called upon Spike, saying:

"Yo, Spike, there is a devouring beast behind us."

Spike comforted them, saying:

"Do not be afraid. You have little faith. Jimmy, who always comes through for us, will deliver us from the mouth of this beast and from other dangers."

As the beast came near them he came up right behind the van, splashing blue and red light upon the scene so that the band members were more and more afraid. Spike raised his hands to the heavens and said:

"It's the cops! Eat your stash!"

The members of The Defeated gathered the drugs necessary for human life and devoured them.

When they had done this the beast that pursued them pulled alongside the van and motioned for them to pull over on the side of the road.

Piker eased the van over onto the shoulder. There was much chaos and freaking out inside the van. Jonaz, the violence enthusiast, stepped forward. He said:

"Spike, you who have led us in the good fight, are greatly distressed. Let me handle this."

Spike disembarked the van and shut the door behind, leaving his brothers to their fear, nausea and grim hallucinations.

A few minutes later Jonaz, the violence enthusiast, came back wearing a cap, badge and pair of Ray Ban sunglasses. He said:

"Texas cops are pussies. How do I look?"

The members of The Defeated and those traveling with them said with one voice:

"Like a fag."

Why We Give It up for Baby J

The holiday season found The Defeated and those traveling with them in a sad and sorry state. They'd had no beer, cheese curls or meth for several days. The heater was on the fritz and all sixteen punk rockers had to share a nasty New Jersey Nets stadium blanket that was crusted over with unseemly excretions from over sixty orifices. They were cold. They were stinky. They were dangerously close to the edge.

Skeebo wearily lifted his head from his bedroll and said:

"Spike, with whom we have traveled far and fought the good fight, how can we continue on our journey to The Promised Land of the Punks without beer and other things necessary for human life?"

Spike stroked his chin hairs, which were soft and sparse, and

said:

"Very simple. We can't. Let us drive to the mall where we will find beer, jerky and vast amounts of the proper supplies that are most needed to our cause."

Skeebo replied:

"How much longer until we get there?"

Spike answered:

"Soon."

Prodded by his gaunt and growling vanmates, he asked:

"How soon?"

Spike answered:

"Soony soon."

Skeebo settled into his bedroll, the chorus of grumbling was like the sibilant burbling of the surf on a boulder-strewn beach.

And onward they drove until they reached the shopping mall. In their haste and hunger they failed to notice that the parking lot was empty. The sign above the vast expanse of black asphalt read: Donner Mall.

It seemed to the men of The Defeated that everything was as Spike had foretold. They parked the van on the sidewalk outside the food court and disembarked in a frenzy, so great was the hunger gnawing at their guts. They converged on the mall, but the mall was closed for it was Christmas Day, the day all of America celebrates the birth of baby Jesus by giving their credit cards a rest.

Don't They Know It's Christmas?

Inside the Donner Mall, it was a different story. Manuel and Javier, a pair of security guards for GoonCorp, Inc., strolled the empty promenade, telling each other lies. When they came to the entrance, they witnessed a distressing scene: sixteen emaciated punk rockers were trying to claw their way into the mall. They were moaning and groaning and whimpering like little girls.

Manuel said:

"Damn, don't these white boys know it's Christmas?"

Javier answered:

"Apparently not."

Manuel said:

"I think I saw this in a movie once. Let's get the fuck out of here."

Fifteen Ways of Cooking a Punk Rocker

Weaker than ever before, The Defeated climbed back into the van. Spike said:

"Let us not tarry here, for it doth well and truly suck."

They drove and drove and then they drove some more. Soon they noticed they were surrounded by trees and that the trees all had a

thick blanket of snow on them. And then the terrible thing, which they had all feared, took place: the van conked out and no amount of coaxing could un-conk it.

Spike addressed the punks: "My brothers, we are fucked."

Measles asked:

"How fucked?"

Spike replied:

"Do you remember the time Felch took all that GHB at the Greek rugby team's ecstasy party? We are fucked even worse than that."

Felch blushed mightily. The rest of the men of The Defeated and those who traveled with them sighed for they knew their situation was dire, dire, dire.

Then it started to snow, and the punk rockers began to freak out, each in his own manner. Jonaz, the violence enthusiast, flogged himself. Seany howled at his dead ancestors. Felch tore off his clothes and bent himself over a bedroll, but alas there were no takers.

Spike addressed the punks in an angry voice:

"Brothers, stop this madness. Especially you, Felch."

The punks gathered round to hear what their leader had to say.

"I wish I had the wisdom to lead us out of this desperate scene, the words to help you beat it, but I

don't. We are all going to die from boredom, hunger or the murderous derangement of those we once called friends. That is why we are called The Defeated. I am sorry. I should have picked a better name."

The brothers were on the verge of freaking out again when Jeff Boyardi, the cook, spoke:

"I have a solution. As soon as one of us passes, I will do the thing that cannot be named and we will continue on our voyage to The Promised Land of the Punks."

This remark drew puzzled stares from the men of The Defeated.

Measles asked:

"What is the thing that cannot be named?"

Boyardi replied:

"I cannot tell you, for if I name the thing that cannot be named, it won't be the thing that cannot be named anymore."

The brothers scratched their lice-furrowed scalps and crab-ridled crotches, and said with one voice:

"So?"

Boyardi relented.

"We will cook and eat a human, the first punk rocker who dies. Hopefully not Measles, because that would be gross."

The brothers murmured their disgusted assent.

Jonaz, the violence enthusiast, shouted:

"But I'm starving now!"

Spike had an idea.

"Brothers, I have an idea. We will draw lots to determine who will make the ultimate sacrifice for The Defeated. Are you all with me?"

One of the latecomers, Ramen, spoke:

"Actually, no. I'm not comfortable with that at all."

Spike said:

"That settles it. You who are not willing to make the ultimate punk rock sacrifice are not worthy of traveling with The Defeated to the Promised Land of the Punks. You are, however, worthy of being killed and eaten."

Ramen protested:

"How is not wanting to be killed and eaten un-punk rock?"

Spike thought a while, and said:

"You are named after food. Technically, you never had a chance. Kill him!"

At which point, much to the chagrin of Jonaz, the violence enthusiast, Ramen keeled over on the spot.

Next, the brothers had to decide in what manner Ramen should be prepared.

The following suggestions

were put forth:

"Let's fricassee his ass!"

"Let's fricassee the whole thing!"

"Let's flay him and smoke the flesh over a fire!"

"Let's cut him up and shish kabob him, also over a fire!"

"Let's boil him in the Irish method!"

"Let's roll him around in bread crumbs and toss him in a vat of burning vegetable oil!"

"Let's broil him!"

"Let's bake him!"

"Let's broil then bake him!"

"Let's sauté his giblets and fry up his liver!"

"Let's slice up his shanks and burn him over mesquite coals."

"Let's put him in the blender and drink him like a protein shake!"

"Eeeew! Let's not."

"Let's roast him slowly and baste him with his own juices."

To which Spike replied:

"As Christmas is a time for traditions, let us simply add water and stick him in the microwave for ninety seconds."

So they did.

Thus, they continued their journey to the Promised Land of the Punks on a steady diet of Ramen.

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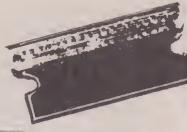
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Shiftless When Idle



Furthermore, being five feet tall and 105 pounds, I can't really get behind anything that relies completely on physical strength. I could be beaten up by a medium-sized dog, to say nothing of a viking!

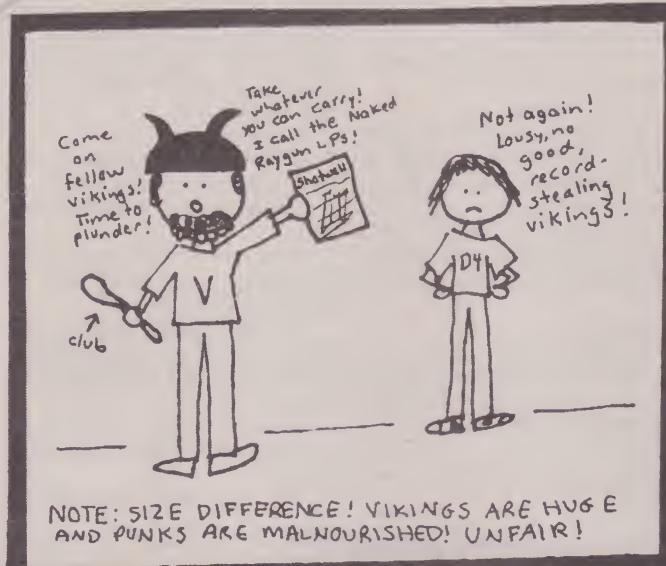
January 1st, 2002! For the first time in my short existence, New Year's actually marks a visible change in my life! No more working eighty-eight hours a week! Now I'm down to a mere, uh sixty hours, plus writing, volunteering, fighting The Man, eating candy, and listening to the Dils! Not bad at all! And I'm still waiting for my check from Ross Perot! (See last issue.) Anyway, with all of this extra time on my hands, I can finally address one of the most important debates in the history of humanity. Yes, that's right, at long last, a *Razorcake* columnist will answer the age-old question of... drumroll, *s'il vous plait*... Which group is more punk: pirates or vikings?

I know, I know, you'd think that such a question would take volumes of text to merely scratch the surface, but I propose to you that one column is all it'll take!

If the Wisconsin punk scene is anything like your local scene (which I'm fairly sure it is not), you're used to this debate by now. Parties full of violent arguments, punks grabbing each other by the throat and shouting, "Aaarr!" while another, horned-hat wearing, Steel-Reserve-drinking punk grabs him from behind and wrestles him to the floor! Punks vs. punks! Pirates vs. vikings! All right!

No party in Wisconsin is complete without someone drunkenly yelling at all the out-of-towners and any newcomers, "Which side are you on? Pirates or vikings?" thereby starting the whole debate all over again.

At Christmas one year, only pirate and viking-themed gifts were exchanged. On-stage banter at local shows often addresses the debate, and our one celebrity (excluding the temporary residence of one Milo Aukerman, as well as, I think, Ben Weasel), Rev. Norb (of Dickies-inspired band Boris the Sprinkler) addressed this issue in a *Hit List* column. But Norb focused more on the obscure sports metaphors involved. (Note to readers: ANY



sports metaphor qualifies as "obscure" to this punk rocker!), and, therefore, the issue clearly deserves more attention.

Early on, I gave my allegiance to the pirates, even though my boyfriend at the time was a confirmed viking. (I know, I know, what was I thinking?) His band created vikings-themed bumper stickers, and their one pirate-supporting member almost changed sides "for the sake of band unity," until I confronted him! With the battle lines so firmly drawn, the scene was consumed with a pirates-and-vikings-themed frenzy!

Okay, so maybe you can file all of the above under: Reasons Not To Move to Wisconsin; but that would imply that Wisconsin has, at least once, entered into your mind as a potential place to relocate. Seeing as how I have never met anyone who even momentarily entertained that option (and I take great pride in coming from such a state!), maybe it would be best to forget about Wisconsin for a while, and address the debate itself.

Why Pirates Are Cooler Than Vikings

Although both pirates and

vikings are sea-faring people, they are about as similar as Lucky Charms and a box of All Bran. In the following ten steps, I will conclusively prove the superiority of pirates once and for all.

1. Pirates rob, cheat, steal, scam, and engage in acts of trickery. Any respectable punk rocker knows the joys of scammin' and stealin'! It's what makes a shit job bearable! It's what allows zines to exist! It's what we live for! Most of you are probably familiar with *Scam* zine (One of the best zines ever. A punk thief's delight!). Just think: if it hadn't been for pirates, Iggy Scam might be a bank teller or middle manager! Instead of squatting, stealing, and scamming, he might be an assistant manager at Barnes and Noble! For shame! And, Iggy Scam pays tribute to his influences by naming one of his many squats the Mutiny! All right!

Vikings, in contrast, obtain their treasures through acts of plundering, murder, and rape. And while every big business could stand to be plundered, and while I keep waiting for a crazy riot to happen in my city so I can participate in the massive looting with the rest of the rabble... murder and rape, duh, are not cool.

Furthermore, being five feet tall and 105 pounds, I can't really get behind anything that relies completely on physical strength. I could be beaten up by a medium-sized dog, to say nothing of a viking!

2. Pirates robbed the kings and queens of Europe. They stole from the rich, state-funded explorers. They ransacked huge ships controlled by the big businesses of their time.

Vikings plundered everything that they could plunder. (Note to self: In the past fifteen minutes, I have used "plunder" more than I have in the entire past twenty-two years.) One of the first rules of punk scamming is: Don't steal indiscriminately. Stick to places that fall into one of the following categories: a.) large, corporate, chain store b.) run by jerks, assholes, etc. c.) run by people who don't fully appreciate the first two Clash albums. If the Vikings were around today, they would be showin' up at your basement show, breaking down the door, taking all of your rare Necros records, stealing the door money, and helping themselves to your macaroni and cheese! Uncool! Uncool! Pirates would never stoop so low! As long as you don't try to transport something via the sea, or own a large business or nation, you're in the clear!

3. Pirates wear cool clothes. Lots of black, eye patches, hooks for hands, peg legs, striped shirts, tattoos. Pirates are hardcore! Of course, they do sometimes wear frilly shirts, and I don't really see the need to carry around a parrot, but, all things considered, pirate fashion is where it's at.

Vikings wear dumb man-clothes, sandals, and lots of armor. Of course, there's no debating that the horned helmet is cool, but besides that, the vikings were not a fashionable lot. They lacked the swashbuckling allure of the pirate. Pirates were today's punks: tattooed, wearing lots of black,

sullen, and rude. Vikings were today's jocks: loud, huge, muscular, violent.

4. Pirates carried swords. Vikings used clubs. Swords = cooler than clubs. Again, swords take some level of skill. Anyone can hit someone with a club. And we all learned a long time ago that punk rock is not an equal opportunity social diversion! It takes skill! Cunning! A love of rock and roll! Something that makes you Not-Everyone-Else! Something that allows you to make fun of your fellow classmates, coworkers, and neighbors! No one-size-fits-all clubbing for us! It's sword time!

5. Pirates were not citizens of any particular country. Whereas the Vikings were plundering in a rather nationalistic fashion, pirates pledged allegiance to no nation! Anarchists! Punk!

6. Pirates never settled in one place. Instead, they continually moved from city to city, sea to sea. And if traveling a ton isn't punk, then Aaron Cometbus isn't punk, my friend Dmitri isn't punk, and I am not punk! It can't be! You know those annoying people from your high school who have no desire to travel outside of the city limits in order to be close to their family?

Vikings, all of them! (The Vikings would settle down ALL THE TIME.) Not cool.

7. Pirates made people "walk the plank," into shark-infested waters. File that under: Things To Do To Your Enemies.

8. Pirates didn't waste any time trying to "discover" America. Therefore, pirates did not leave us any annoying dates to memorize in grade school history class. Vikings, on the other hand, were often the subject of a lengthy essay about the New World. Every other grade school test asked some question about Leif Erikson. My grade school spent most of the year on explorers, EVERY YEAR. I know Ponce de Leon and Leif and Balboa and the rest of 'em better than I know the lyrics to several Descendents albums! Damn my grade school! Damn you, vikings, for doing historical things historically! The only reference to pirates in grade school was in passing, a quick, "Pirates stole from the kings and queens and therefore sea travel was dangerous." And they were never on any test! Why? Because punk rock is not taught in schools! Since when have you studied, say, Aaron Cometbus or the complete works of the Germs in school? Haven't? Of course not! Pirates,

zinesters, drugged-up-drunk punks... none of 'em are gonna be the topic of your high school history class anytime soon! And that's the way it should be! No use having some stupid high school teacher attempt to analyze the significance of dumpster diving from a sociological perspective, or the cool aesthetics of the pirate! Save all that fun learning for late nights by yourself, fueled on coffee, good music, and midnight bike rides!

9. Pirates are referenced WAY more than vikings in the world of punk rock. Sure, there is a band called The Vikings, and they do rock quite hard. But, pirates! Bands like the Criminals, the Misfits, and the Pogues have used pirate imagery, and about half of all punk bands have used a skull and cross bones in some sort of form. And, lest we forget. Johnny Thunders even wrote a song called "Pirate Love," and if a Johnny Thunder's song isn't a good enough reason to like something, I'm ready to kill myself right here and now! (But not before doing a lot of heroin and running off the Paris to hang out with Stiv!)

10. Pirates are known for their

drunkenness. Vikings are known for their... uh... really long oars?

I think that I have successfully proven my case. So, the next time you sneak across the heavily-guarded Wisconsin border, be ready to take the side of the pirates! Bring your eye patch, parrot, and Criminals records! And leave your Viking friends at home!

-Maddy



Maddy

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Rich Mackin

The Twisted Balloon

Should the guy who stopped the tanks in Tiananmen Square pretended to be a nutty crossing guard? No.

Rich Mackin

Why Protests Are Your Best Entertainment Value

Some years ago, I did a few issues of a zine called *Protests Are Your Best Entertainment Value*. It was only a three-issue lifespan, but the zine, or at least the concept, lives on. The actual zine took a lot more effort than my other projects and, due to the nature of it and due to me being a very busy guy, it was pretty inconsistent. I feel no shame in letting it die, especially when I can do the same concept online much easier. But the point is the concept of the title, that protesting not only can be fun, but also is arguably better fun than much of the "entertainment" in our society.

Many many years ago, I was at a picnic at my grandmother's house with most of my relatives. I was maybe ten, and barely understood what the actual subject of conversation was among the adults, but I did understand that something about a proposed local law or something was upsetting them. I asked if they called the mayor to tell him they were upset. They said, "No." I asked, "Why not?" They told me that didn't make any difference. I said it had to make more difference than complaining to your relatives. I left it at that, but thought that if maybe they called or wrote the mayor or something, they would be able to feel like something was done enough to have a more enjoyable conversation at a picnic on a beautiful day.

I am twenty-nine now, and so I guess I have been a grown-up for a while. Two things I notice about grownups (well, people in our society, but grownups especially): 1) They are really into "entertainment," which means watching something, usually on a screen while sitting, usually created for the sole point of being entertainment. (Younger humans, teenagers usually, have more social inclinations and join together to look for something "to do.") 2) They like to complain. If I am correct, this means that the average American adult thinks that things can



How many cops does it take to arrest a clown?

be better, but rather than doing anything about it, they complain about it while passing the time away watching sitcoms and poorly written films. Wouldn't it make more sense to see these two problems as fixable with one solution... do something about it?

That's what some of us do. There is a new group in Worcester, Mass called DCFIY... "don't complain, fix it yourself!" And there are people like me who see the potential for activism as fun. Heck, not only can activism be fun, but I dare say that fun activism can be the best activism.

Let me present a theory that having fun is better than not having fun. Let me further that by postulating that fun people are held in higher regard than non-fun people. So, who do you think might make a better impression — a group of serious stiff shouting at people, complainers, brick-throwing vandals, or radical cheerleaders, pupeteers, and upbeat, positive people doing positive things?

Okay, let me acknowledge that I am mostly talking about protests, not the general concept of activism, nor the idea of "actions" in which something is done directly in reaction to something, visibly or not. Protests are events. Protests are

reactions against something, someplace, someone. To be a devil's advocate against myself, being a protester does to some extent mean waiting for something bad and then reacting against it, while being an activist can be initiating good without a bad to be standard of comparison. Also, not all activism is supposed to be fun. Should Rosa Parks have done a dance? No. Should the guy who stopped the tanks in Tiananmen Square pretended to be a nutty crossing guard? No. But did Michael Moore make more of an impact by sending cheerleaders and clowns to a White Supremacist gathering than he would with anger? Yes. And are consumers going to be more open to people singing funny protest songs than angry shouts? Yes.

The first issue of PAYBEV was about a Niketown protest. For those of you who don't know, Nike is the athletic wear company that exploits the sweatshop factory workers that make the actual products, while paying millions to celebrity spokespeople and executives. This, my friends, is because the point of today's consumer economy is BRANDING. People don't buy, sell, and market products based on the product's quality or usefulness so much as its coolness.

Even if you are self-absorbed enough to not care if people make a fair living for a hard day's work, consider that company's like Nike don't care about how their products are made nearly as much as how their ads are.

To put it another way, one year Michael Jordan made more money from Nike than all the factory workers combined. Of course, Mike also lives in a free-er country and doesn't get physically punished. I'm not going to get into all the arguments right now, because then this will turn into a series of explanations of globalization, predatory business, and the concept of living wage versus minimum wage... basically Nike is a mean company. CEO Phil Knight is a mean man, and it shouldn't be hard to find any sources for future research. At the time the zine came out, Phil Knight was making about 1.7 MILLION DOLLARS a YEAR, money going to a total 5 billion dollar personal net worth. Nike Factory workers at the time were making \$1.60 – \$2.46 a DAY, depending on what country the factory is in. Oh, and those work days were usually twelve hours or longer.

Meanwhile, Phil is kind of a jerk anyway. In the film *The Big One*, Michael Moore asks him why he doesn't just build factories in America, where unions and media and freedom and the same language (mostly) allow people to make sure the people in factories are treated at least somewhat less badly. (Which makes me wonder what happened to the pride of owning something "American Made" — did globalizing capitalism diffuse the more logical elements of patriotism?) Phil said that Americans don't want to make shoes. Together, they agreed, on camera, that Phil would build a factory in an American city that had X amount of citizens who would work there. Mike returned with X many video testimonials, but Phil still didn't build the factory. He did give a quarter of a million dollars to Tonya Harding's legal fund, though.

I think it's important to talk about the names of CEOs and other heads of companies. It's one thing to think about Nike as an abstract company entity. But corporations, Nike especially, are the work of human beings who make decisions. More so than Nazi soldiers, Phil Knight isn't even "just following orders"; he is making decisions and choices. Hell, he is GIVING the damn orders. He has the power to treat people right, but instead, he just treats himself.

People who are into the status-quo and those who want to kill messengers ask, "But isn't this the way all these companies work? Doesn't Nike pay as much as any place these people work in?" Have we come to this? Do we care that little about others? The funny thing is, many people feel no pity about sweatshop workers but complain loudly about how little their own, less dangerous and stressful jobs pay. Yet the average American can afford entertainment commodity — going to see eight (at the time) dollar movies, buy VCRs, wear hundred-dollar sneakers made in sweatshops. And yes, many companies run sweatshops — Wal-Mart, Disney, Gap, Old Navy, Banana Republic (the last three being one company), Abercrombie and Fitch, Sears, J.C. Penney, the Limited, Lane Bryant, McDonald's (those happy meal toys are made by poor kids! A friend said that Disney and happy meal toys are arguably the worst — workers know why people need sweaters, but why do they need a Stimpie pencil top? And it's especially mean to make kids make toys they can't play with). But if everyone else is doing it, would you jump off a bridge? What the hell is this? Come on, all the COOL companies run sweatshops. People like to make snap judgements about the economies and government situations of countries they not only have not been to or studied, but likely have only barely heard of.

So July 19, 1997, Nike put a Niketown in my city. So we showed up to protest. We returned many times over the years. Sure we shouted, sure we were angry, but that wasn't all we did.

If you recall, in 1997, thirty-nine people killed themselves, thinking that they would ascend to a spaceship in the tail of the Hale-Bopp comet. They all were wearing purple shrouds and Nike sneakers. The fact that Nike was the seemingly official shoe of a death cult was not lost on those of us who lied down with purple shrouds over us, fake swooshes on our feet, or those of us who offered any passerby free apple sauce (which the cultists put poison in. We didn't).

Actually, snacks did become

a fixture at Niketown protests. At the second protest, on Oct. 18, World Anti-Nike Day (and you know you suck when you have a day against you.) a man dressed in a funny hat and Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream carton costume walked up and down fashionable Newbury Street handing out chocolate chip cookie samples. He saw us and immediately glommed on unofficially to the protest, providing cookies for all. This was before Ben and Jerry's got eaten up by the evil multinational corporation and my personal nemesis, Unilever (parent company of Lever Brothers and their insidious 2000 parts ad campaign). After that, I started making a point to have such cookies at every Niketown Protest, in memory of this and also because adamant anti-Nike cartoonist, Gary Trudeau, published a book called "Even Revolutionaries Like Chocolate Chip Cookies!" Hooray for inside jokes and cross-references. Hell, hooray for cookies! (And yes, mine were vegan.)

Ah, but back to the original protest...

We had a large and diverse group. The Church of Euthanasia was out in full force. People had props such as crucified chickens and giant toothbrushes. Some people would come over and ask about these props and, after having Nike explained to them, they would react, "Well, that's a stupid prop then, because it has nothing to do with that." The answer, of course, "It got you to come talk to me about it."

Vermin Supreme arrived. Ah. How I love Vermin. He was in clown wig, nose and lab coat. His invariably has the best, funniest and most thought provoking protest banter ever. Targeted as a troublemaker, he was arrested. At one point, six cops were physically handling him, (passively, non-violently, but still) including the one who shopped at Niketown before leaving the scene. They just wanted to get him away from the protest, and they admitted it in so many words at his trial for trespassing on public property. Vermin said the three lost hours were worth getting his clown wig and nose in a sealed evidence bag.

Evan O'Television (not his real name, but a moniker he uses often) used a TV as a crystal ball in a performance piece mocking the lack of scrutiny of corporate crime in mainstream media. Also wearing a purple shroud, he offered up copies of the latest *TV Guide*, which coincidentally featured sweatshop queen Kathy Lee Gifford on the cover. A passerby threw out the standard heckle of the forcefully apathetic, "Get a Job!"

Evan was quick to reply, "I have a job. How do you think I can afford all these *TV Guides*?"

And let me once again digress for a minute. Why do people always shout, "Get a job" as an insult? What relevance does that ever have? Is it implied that I can't have a job if I protest? Especially in cases like this when it's Saturday afternoon? I mean, whoever says that isn't at work, EITHER. Are they implying that they don't have a job, and when they tell others to get jobs, is it some form of externalized self-loathing?

Another thing often shouted at such situations is, "Get a life!" What is that supposed to mean? Is the idea "get a life like mine"? Because me and my friends are out here, singing and playing and eating cookies and having a good time and shouting our views, can you tell me what exactly we're missing? Or maybe it's just that there are a lot of mean people in the northeastern United States, and they shout everything at everyone.

Anyway.

I think the idea that offends so many passers-by about protesters, so that they shout, "Get a job," "Get a life," etc. is the ingrained idea of wasting time. This from the society that created "reality TV" and online quizzes. "Why are you protesting? You could be home watching the 3rd time *Road Rules* is on this week or finding out what Nintendo character best suits your personality!" And this brings me to the concept of protesting being the best entertainment value. This specific anti-Nike protest was on a beautiful summer afternoon, it was mostly a group of friends, or at least like-minded people who become friends. We did

funny performance art, made lots of noise and felt like we made a point at the end of it. It was cheaper than a movie and involved fresh air. It allowed us to be creative and use our minds. We didn't have to wait in line or buy tickets in advance.

—Rich Mackin

Companies that enjoy using sweatshops to fatten their wallets...

Nike
CEO Phil Knight
1 Bowerman Dr.
Beaverton, OR 97005
(1800)EGG NIKE (no, really)

J.C. Penney
CEO/ Chairman, Allen I. Questrom
6501 Legacy Dr.
Plano, TX 75024

Lane Bryant
CEO/ Chairman, Russell Stravitz
Five Limited Parkway East
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068

The Limited
Chairman/ CEO, Leslie H. Wexner
Three Limited Parkway
Columbus, OH 43068

OshKosh B'Gosh
Chairman/ CEO, Douglas W. Hyde
112 Otter Ave
Oshkosh, WI 54901

Sears Roebuck
CEO/ Chairman, Alan J. Lacy
3333 Beverly Rd.
Hoffman Estates, IL 60179

Wal Mart
Chairman, S. Robson Walton
702 Southwest 8th St
Bentonville, AR 72716

GAP, Inc.
Chairman, Donald J. Fisher
900 Cherry Ave.
San Bruno, CA 94066

Rich Mackin





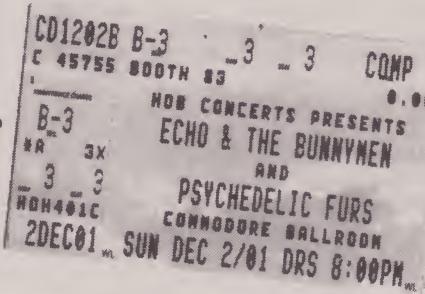
Nardwuar

Who Are You?



The reason God gave us hair is to grow it and do something with it.

Nardwuar the Human Serviette vs.
Ian McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen!
Part Two!
(With a little help from Courtney Love...)



Nardwuar: Oh yeah, Ian McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen, Courtney says "Also, let Ian know I didn't diss him at the chateau last year. I was really busy and would totally like to take him to a great dinner."

Ian: Was that the chateau?

Nardwuar: Okay. She emailed me these questions and some of her typing is a bit confusing. So what was that about? "Also let Ian know I didn't diss him at the chateau last year. I was really busy and would totally like to take him to a great dinner."

Ian: Oh, that'd be brilliant! I'd love to! We're back out in America in November, but if she wants to do this song with me, it might be even sooner. I might come out if she's in LA. I'd come out there and we'd hang and stuff. I think it was just a tentative kind of meeting planned, but she couldn't make it. Nothing happened "weirdly." We just didn't make the rendezvous, but we were trying to hook up, you know.

Nardwuar: Now Ian McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen, there's a whole section here on Michael Mooney. Now for people who don't know, who is Michael Mooney? I understand he's the guy who Courtney lost her virginity to.

Ian: I believe so, yeah. A great lookin' lad. Played with the Bunnymen. He did a tour with us in '83, so he's been around for ages, you know. I'd heard his bands. And then I got him in to come in and play rhythm guitar 'cause I wanted to concentrate on singing. He was good looking, very good looking dude, kind of like a Tom Cruise-y face, you know. Last time I heard, he was quite a lot older looking. No Dorian Gray going on. But he was a great laugh. I think he's living in Bristol now. He always made me laugh.

Nardwuar: Isn't he in Spiritualized too?

Ian: He's not anymore.

Nardwuar: Well, Ian McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen, here is Courtney Love's "Michael Mooney section" of questions directed towards you. Courtney says, and we kind of

already answered this but, "Ask

Ian, whatever happened to Michael Mooney and tell him I don't care what Michael says. I was a virgin and had a really sweet night with him."

Ian: Ahhhh, well obviously Mike's being less than gentlemanly about what he said (about Courtney) and you know, Mike's been through... his memory is probably not what it should be due to, you know, "things" shall we say — the same as all of our memories. That's a lovely thing that Courtney's just said. Of course she was a virgin, 'cause she wouldn't have said it otherwise.

Nardwuar: Ian McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen, Courtney also says "Ask Ian if he remembers Michael Mooney's insane drunk mother."

Ian: I'm not sure if I ever met her. He kept me away. He once told me he had kind of an Alsatian dog (a type of German Shepard) that used to blow him off as well.

Nardwuar: Excuse me here, he had a dog that used to blow him off?

Ian: So he told me, yeah. He told me not to tell anyone. So here I am telling the Human Serviette. But you can pass that on to Courtney anyway. I might be the only person who knows it and if... ahhh, who cares, you know, he's probably said as much about me. But he did tell me that his mother was right nutter, yeah.

Nardwuar: Just winding up here with Ian McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen and in case anyone's wondering, we're asking questions of Ian McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen emailed to me from Courtney Love. So I guess I'm the "via" person here. I'm the "Via"! Courtney Love Vs. Ian McCulloch VIA Nardwuar the Human Serviette, me here, live from Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. So Courtney says, "Tell Ian that I, Courtney, would never have gotten so obsessed with Michael Mooney if he hadn't written me a twenty-page letter asking to come to California because I'm sure it's legend that I wrote him a twenty-page letter back."

Ian: Yeah, I heard kind of on the grapevine by this point... um... Mike was a really good laugh, but maybe not right for relationships, and obviously he wasn't if he's denying what he did or kind of trying to rewrite history. I find that pathetic. It's fine if you've gotta cover something up, because you're trying to protect yourself or a loved one you know? Say for instance you're married and you don't want all this crap coming out — but as far as I was aware, Mike's never been involved in that kind of relationship.

Nardwuar: Do you know what Courtney's talking about in that twenty-page letter? I found it a bit confusing.

Ian: No, I don't know. Again, I thought at the end of the day her obsession was really with me and all the other people were kind of just satellites.

Nardwuar: Ian of Echo and the Bunnymen, Courtney says "Ask Ian if Michael Mooney turned out to be gay."

Ian: Haha! [laughs] I think he might have had those kind of tendencies, but I'm not sure. It's a fair question and the only fair answer is to say I don't know. But I know what she's talking about, I think, yeah. Not for myself, but I can understand why she might think that he could turn out that way.

Nardwuar: Ian did you diss your last Bunnymen record? Did you diss your last Bunnymen record?

Ian: No, never.

Nardwuar: Because here's a question from Courtney Love to you Ian McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen and it says, "Tell Ian, he shouldn't diss the last record because me and Michael Stipe believe fiercely, as does Jim, my boyfriend, that that record is a total soundtrack to being in your mid-thirties."

Ian: Awwwww, that's nice that Stipey likes it as well. Tell Courtney I've never dissed it. It's my second favorite Bunnymen record. If not me favorite you know, it's either that or *Ocean Rain*. I love it. It's Will who's dissed it, cause he doesn't understand what the songs are saying. He doesn't understand lyricism. She's talking about "What Are You Going to Do With Your Life?" Which I'm glad she loves. I think it's probably the best thing I've ever done. So tell her "no, no, no." I just don't think Will felt he was "on" it, you know, and that's why he found it hard to take, you know. And I can understand that, but as a record, I think Will, if it was by anyone else, he'd say, "I'd really like that." It's possibly my favorite album. There's a woman who goes to loads of Bunnymen shows in America and Europe and wherever, and it's her favorite Bunnymen record. Her mum died kind of during that period and it helped her through it.

And for me, I love it. And I find it funny – it's Jim Barber, as in Robin Barber, her best friend when she came out to Liverpool – the other girl. **Nardwuar:** That's interesting isn't it?

Ian: Jim Barber. Yeah. And I remember her being conscious about how her hair should look as well.

Nardwuar: You really love hair, don't you Ian? **Ian:** Yeah, I love it.

Nardwuar: Speaking of hair and stuff, what sort of hairstyles offend you? Are there any hairstyles that offend you?

Ian: Mullets. Definitely, mullets are the worst. And Bono did have a mullet, I mean God love him but he was a mullet-wearing dude. And I don't like skinheads. I don't like the fact that it's now kind of "the look." The reason God gave us hair is to grow it and do something with it.

Nardwuar: Were you into the mod revival at all? Were you into any of those bands like the Chords, the Purple Hearts, or the Prisoners?

Ian: Nah

Nardwuar: None of that stuff?

Ian: Never liked that. I wasn't into the Who much, y'know? I was into the Velvet Underground, the Doors, nothing to do with London... with BOWIE's London. I hated all that kind of scooters and Brighton Beach, you know, and chains around the wrists...

Nardwuar: But you guys did like the 1965-'67 English Freakbeat scene, didn't you?

Ian: Will probably did. I probably don't have one record coming from that scene so I wouldn't know, but I was more into the American scene... you know, Bowie was English. I was into Bowie, and Lou Reed and the Velvets, Iggy Pop, and the Doors. Probably Nirvana

and, of course, Hole. That kind of music is always so dark and Jerry.

Nardwuar: Ian McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen: Courtney Love says, "Ask Ian why I have never played Liverpool. Is there even a hotel there?!"

Ian: HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA! [laughs] Oh, God, she's good. Yeah... we've now got about [thinking] oooh... apart from the rubbish ones, we've got probably about five hotels that even Courtney would care to stay at.

Nardwuar: Ian McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen: Courtney Love says, "Ask Ian what happened to Will's ex-girlfriend Laura, the nice, blonde girl."

Ian: She was a bitch. [laughs] No, I mean, Laura she was all right, but she was weird. And Will fell in love with someone and he married her. But I don't know what happened to Laura. I don't know if she's still in Liverpool or... But she was a little bit weird and she said a few weird things that weren't true, like she said to Lorraine that I'd been with Nastassja Kinski and I hadn't. And it got back to Liverpool. Nastassja Kinski had phoned the hotel and stuff, but I've never even met her... But Lorraine picked up

Laura in the street, this is while the Bunnymen were on tour. So it was New York, Boston, Iceland, then Denmark, Glasgow. But I was in Glasgow, and it was just after being to New York. And we played Roseland and Nastassja Kinski had gone – phoned the hotel, you know, "Ian, I loved the show, phone number, and blah blah blah." And then I got back to Liverpool. Obviously I told the boys. They were at the reception at the hotel when the bloke gave me the message saying Nastassja Kinski had called. I thought, "Bloody hell! Nastassja Kinski phoned!" Some of the band went back to Liverpool, straight from America – the kind of

introduced to her? Were lots of people like her just showing up on your doorstep or hanging with the band? I mean, was this unusual: someone from America? What are your memories of that?

Ian: I don't know. I mean I just heard that she'd moved over to Liverpool 'cause, I mean, I think I was her number one bloke, you know. But obviously Lorraine, so whatever... I can't, the chronology, you know, I can't remember, but she's got a much better memory. As she said in the first question early on, or the first statement that she was there to learn. I think that was always apparent... she wasn't, you know... I just saw her as a fan... not just as a fan, but sort of as someone who was on the scene which was a good thing. She always kind of, she had no fear.

Nardwuar: Well I think it's amazing that you can say, "Oh we heard she was in town." Like here she is just some young girl, and she already has this huge reputation.

Ian: Exactly. And she had a vibe to her... and to come, you know, at 15, 16 and when her and Robin came over there, she decided to live in Liverpool for, I think it was like, two years. It was easily a year. But to know the right group, even though she did dabble with Teardrop Explodes music. She picked the right group in The Bunnymen and you know, it's hats off from there on in.

Nardwuar: I know. She could have picked the New Wave of British Heavy Metal, eh?

Ian: Yeah or some dogs. You know, there were so many bands coming over, but she knew the best one, and I wish I would have spent more time... I mean that's one thing. I wish I had spent more time, maybe talking to them in those old days, but I was kind of

always... I wasn't... I don't know if I was shy, but I was a bit, kind of, guarded maybe. And I think we'd probably have a much better conversation now anyway, to be honest.

Nardwuar: Well, Ian McCulloch of Echo and The Bunnymen, the last question here from Courtney Love directed to you via me, Nardwuar the Human Serviette, via email is, Courtney Love says, "Ask Ian McCulloch of Echo and The Bunnymen if I can have one of his old trenchcoats. I'll wear it a lot and make them cool again."

Ian: Hahahahaha. [laughs] Definitely! Ahhhm, well let's... if you can... do you know... you can obviously just... you're gonna email her. Tell her I'll find the right... I've got a couple... ahhhm... definitely she can have one of them... and she'll look... I've got a very long trenchcoat that she might... I know she's tall but she might have to take it in a little ankle-length or mid-shin length coat. But she can definitely have one of them. What I'll do is when we get together to do this song that we're going to do, I will bring it over and she can have it from me and I'll probably also offer her this fantastic one she should have 'cause I never wear it, but I'll





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pack it. And it cost a fortune, she'd be pleased to know. I've hardly ever worn it and it's pretty much mint condition and it's more girly. I couldn't wear it... it's a great coat... it would suit her. **Nardwuar:** You still wear trench coats, don't you Ian? You still wear them.

Ian: Yeah. It was my thing and everyone started wearing them.

Nardwuar: But even up 'till today...

Ian: I stole it from Bowie and from *The Man Who Fell to Earth*. That was really what got me. And because I didn't have any clothes. I was going to the punk clubs when I was sixteen, but my dad had this coat in the wardrobe and I thought, "I'll wear that." And I tied it up with a piece of string, you know, around the waist. And there I was, Humphrey Bogart.

Nardwuar: So that's the end of the Courtney Love questions to Ian McCulloch of Echo and The Bunnymen and I, Nardwuar the Human Serviette, just have a couple of quick questions to ask you, Ian. Is there anything you'd like to say to Courtney Love now that we've gone through all these questions, once we transcribe this interview and broadcast it to the world, that you would like to go on record as saying?

Ian: Ahhhm... I'm totally, kind of... kind of flabbergasted that she's gone... you know, that she still thinks about us and it meant that much, and hopefully it still does. Obviously if she's loving the last album. You know, what I do, hopefully, is never gonna go away. I'd like to say, let's get together and have a chat, face to face. But I would love to do a song with her because I think her voice is great and I think it would be a great kind of, full circle thing to happen. I think both of us would really enjoy it and it would be a blast.

Nardwuar: I just love the idea, when she says stuff like, you know, Bono, like "Me and Bono were out." I just love that. It's like... this sounds hilarious. "Me and Bono." "Me and Michael Stipe." Like, it's one thing to say "Michael Stipe." He's kind of like, you know, everywhere. But to say, you know, "Me and Bono were partying." I love that. "Bono," just thrown in the middle there. I think she's done pretty good with remembering all this stuff. It's incredible.

Ian: I know, man. It's mad.

Nardwuar: And it's not lies.

Ian: And to be honest there's not a lot I remember. I remember the feeling on stage quite a lot but, I don't remember... I remember odd incidents that connected with any kind of well-ordered life. You know, she seems to remember things like real benchmark times in her life and I don't. I remember laughing me head off, ahmm, once in Pete de Freitas's room, with Will. But it wasn't a pivotal point in my life. It was just one night, we smoked some dope and... 'cause me and Will weren't dope smokers, but we couldn't help laughing. And that was... maybe that was pivotal. But ah...

Nardwuar: You don't remember Julian's wife's pooping problem, do you?

Ian: Ahhh, no, just got on with me own [laughs] pooping problems.

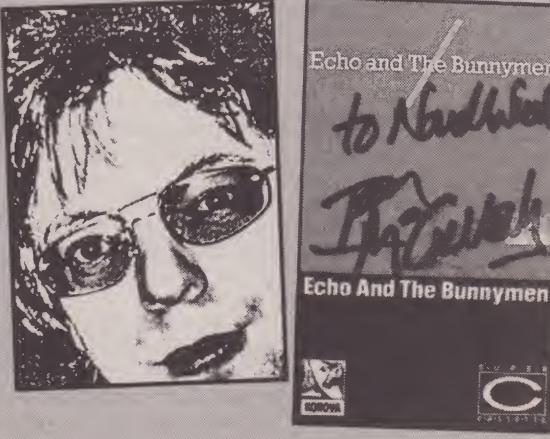
Nardwuar: Now speaking of remembering stuff, is it true, Ian, that Holly Johnson of Frankie Goes to Hollywood wrote an autobiog-

raphy entitled, *A Bone in My Flute* and it mentioned you and Budgie?

Ian: And said what?

Nardwuar: It mentioned you and Budgie.

Ian: Oh yeah. It would have mentioned me and Budgie, I'm sure. Not in that way. I wasn't the bone in his flute. Boy, it's a great title, *Bone in My Flute*. [laughs] Ahhhm... yeah, I mean obviously, we all went to the same club. Holly was a year younger than me. There was a club where we all went... you know it was the hangout where all the bands played. The first bands to play there were The Stranglers, then The Runaways, then the Pistols. It opened in October 1976 and I was there the first night with few other cats. Pete Burns (Dead or Alive), probably was there the first night. I think the Hollies turned up, maybe slightly later, but they might



Ian: He once told me he had kind of an Alsation dog that used to blow him off as well.

Nardwuar: Excuse me here, he had a dog that used to blow him off?

Ian: So he told me, yeah. He told me not to tell anyone. So here I am telling the Human Serviette.

have been there straight away. There were different kinds of factions. Not so much cliques but different kind of people who were into — most were into Bowie somewhere down the line. That was one of Julian's problems. He never really understood why people were into Bowie. And you know, that's a real failing in a bloke, I think.

Nardwuar: Didn't Frankie Goes To Hollywood cover "Ferry Cross the Mersey"?

Ian: Yeah, they did, badly. But, you know the fairest things that they came out with, "Relax" and "Two Tribes" were mega. I really like Holly. He's a nice bloke and, you know, he's just got on with his thing and he does all right, you know.

Nardwuar: I always mention this to British bands but there's a version of like, Frankie Goes To Hollywood touring and there's no original members in the band.

Ian: Hahahaha [laughs]

Nardwuar: They played Vancouver and it was like, a cousin of one of them was in the band.

Ian: Noooo. [disbelief]

Nardwuar: Amazing. Like, not one original member but they were touring as Frankie Goes To Hollywood.

Ian: Fantastic!

Nardwuar: And Ian McCulloch of Echo and The Bunnymen, winding up here, where were you during those riots in Toxteth? You know, the riots in Toxteth.

Ian: Toxteth. Well, I was born in Toxteth. I'd just come back from a tour the day before and I was at me mom's house with Lorraine in the back room playing Leonard Cohen records, whatever. Then we heard about it. Me mom calls and says, "Oh geez. Look what they're doing." And then we watched it on the telly and it was mad. We were like two miles away from it. It was bizarre. So I was actually in Liverpool, but I'd just come back, you know. Obviously, there was something in the air brewing. I think we'd just come back from Europe or somewhere.

Nardwuar: You've never been to a football riot have you?

Ian: I was at Hillsborough. It wasn't a riot. It was where people got crushed and, yeah I was at Hillsborough Stadium, on April 15, 1989 when the ninety-six people died. Luckily I wasn't one of them, but it was horrible. But it was nothing to do with a riot. But, no I've never seen anything like that go on really. Thank God... But anyway, this has been a total thrill.

Nardwuar: Well thank you very much Ian. Really appreciate it. I just wanted, just to finish off here. Ian McCulloch of Echo and The Bunnymen, do you have any impressions for us, any Dylan impressions or Lou Reed impressions you can give us?

Ian: I can do a great Dylan, but I need a guitar and I haven't got one in the room. Lou Reed... it's... I mean, I do him all the time. Just play some of our records and there will be a bit of Lou in there. When I was a kid I started off doing Elvis Presley [Ian then does an Elvis mumble] and David Bowie [Ian then does a very convincing Bowie impression]. That was my David Bowie!

Nardwuar: Baboom!

Ian: Baboom!

Nardwuar: Ian, can you say something profound? Can you say something profound to us?

Ian: Yeah. Deep.

Nardwuar: What about, "The cat sat on the mat"?

Ian: Oh, the cat crapped in the crib, crapped, and then crapped out again. I've got two things even more profound than that [Ian says those two things but unfortunately we can not make them out].

Nardwuar: Baboom times two! Now Ian McCulloch of Echo & The Bunnymen, lastly here. Is your best facial feature your lips?

Ian: Yep.

Nardwuar: All right, well thanks very much for your time. Really appreciate it, Ian. Anything else you'd like to add to the people out there?

Ian: Just keep digging it and believe every word Courtney Love says. Especially when it's about me being the greatest that ever lived.

Nardwuar: Thanks for going along with this too. All these questions are made up. No, just joking! And keep on rockin' in the free world, Ian McCulloch of Echo and The Bunnymen. And doot doola doot doo...

Ian: [laughs] Doot doo.

To hear this interview hop to
<<http://www.nardwuar.com>>





Suddenly in the middle of the crowd, there arose such a clatter. 650 heads turn to witness ruckus anti-matter!

The Dinghole Reports

By the Rhythm Chicken
(Commentary by Francis Funyuns)
[Edited by Dr. Sienarf]

It was the punk club where ANYTHING could happen, and on occasion it did. Where else in America could you see a lard-eating contest where the winner received free admission for a year (and went home 30 minutes later with severe stomach pains after downing $\frac{3}{4}$ a pound of lard)? Where else could you see the Quadrajets strip naked atop their feedbacking amps in a drunken tribal dance? One night Jonathan Richman would be playing "Pablo Picasso" to thirty people. The next night the Candy Snatchers would be tossing cups of urine on the crowd. Where else would the Pleasure Fuckers and Nashville Pussy play an all-ages show till 3 A.M. in a blizzard on May 1st? Where else would bands like the Phantom Surfers, the Rip-Offs, the Donnas, the Humpers, and the

Groovie Ghoulies fly in to play one show and fly home? Where else could you see the club owner give a piledriver to the singer of Ten Foot Pole? Where else could you find more wrestling in the women's bathroom than on the stage? Where else would you see Guitar Wolf play a matinee show with Squirtgun? Where else would you see the club owner take out a roadie with a folding chair? From Teengenerate to At the Drive In. From the Oblivians to the Buzzcocks. From Servotron to the Headcoats. From the Nobodys to Low. From the Lunachicks to Hum. From the Descendents to Impaler. From Killdozer to Rachels. Where else would C.C. DeVille of Poison show up to see Bantam Rooster? For seven years bands would drive (or fly) right past Milwaukee, right past Madison, and go play that quirky all-ages rock club on the frozen tundra in Titletown, USA; Green Bay, Wisconsin, the eye of the Midwestern rock storm!

Jerry the Doorman is on top of the crowd! Fuckin' zaniness!



(OK, whatever, Rhythm Chicken. I suppose the capital of the modern fashion world is in Pulaski, too. — F.F.)

I'm sure there's a few regulars at Party Marty's Polish Palace who would agree with you on that.

[Excuse me, Mr. Chicken, but doesn't it seem that everybody thinks that THEIR club in THEIR town is the best? — Dr. S.]

At times, yes. But in this case I can say with the utmost confidence that one of the most spectacular, riotous, fun, and surreal rock clubs ever to grace our four dimensions was RockNRoll Highschool (aka the Concert Cafe) (aka the Compound) (aka the Speakeasy's band room) (aka 1116 Main St., Titletown, USA!). I guess you could say the place was one big dinghole, Green Bay's dinghole! And on any given night Northeastern Wisconsin's wayward rockers would climb into this dinghole and circumcise the roof of the sucker!

(Wait a minute, Chicken. I'm confused. I've been meaning to ask you, what IS a dinghole? — F.F.)

[Yes, Mr. Chicken. I've checked all my biology and anatomy text books. I've done numerous Internet searches. I've even asked Woodsy the owl, and I cannot find a working definition for a dinghole. Please explain to your readers who have actually read this far, WHAT IS A DINGHOLE? — Dr. S.]

Well, Doctor, I will address your inquiry in due time. First, I feel compelled to deliver my own Dinghole Eulogy for RockNRoll Highschool.... THE CLUB

THAT SAVED MY LIFE! Yes, it's true! It was an extremely blizzard-stricken weeknight in Green Bay. Most people stayed in their igloos awaiting the certain snow day to come. I, however, had a date with my favorite Pabst tapper. The usual 10 minute drive to the Speakeasy took an hour of snowdrift ramming, tail-spinning, horn-honking, and swerve-y tire-spinning. To even my OWN surprise, I MADE IT! I rammed my car atop a snowbank and snowshoed into the tavern without any regard for my means of returning home. This is a common Wisconsin mindset. The only other customer in the Speakeasy was Jess Murphy, the Concert Cafe's candy counter cashier. After a few pitchers, I asked how he planned on getting home. He said, "We can just crash in the Cafe till the plows come through in the morning." This was good enough for me and my liver. Around 2 A.M. we trudged through snow three feet deep to the rock club next door. There was nothing more horrifying than waking up hung over in a cold grimy rock club on a sperm encrusted couch with the stage's crusty drum rug draped over my near-corpse. However, I WAS ALIVE! I could've DIED trying to get home that night! The Concert Cafe was truly a LIFE SAVER!

(Hey, Dr. Sienarf. He's getting delusional again. — F.F.)

[Mr. Chicken, you're evading my question. What is a dinghole? — Dr. S.]

You are SO correct, Doctor! It's time for another Dinghole Report!

Dinghole Report #18: RockNRoll Highschool, Rest in Ruckus
(Rhythm Chicken sighting #222)

Timebomb Tom has thrown many a wild-ass show in this venue, and he wasn't about to let the place close down without one big final blowout. He had to stretch

this dinghole till it ripped, and he did. As Elton would say, Saturday night is all right for fighting! Rock & Roll on a Saturday night! S-A-T-U-R-D-A-Y.... NIGHT! It was December 1st, 2001, a Saturday night. The Queers postponed recording their new album to fly in and headline this atomic lineup: the Shut-ups, the Methadones, Boris the Sprinkler, the Gaza Strippers, The New Bomb Turks, and the Queers. The Rhythm Chicken wasn't on the flyer, but most of the Green Bay regulars knew I wouldn't let the place officially die without one last dose of poultry-flavored ruckus!

RockNRoll Highschool had an official fire capacity of 350 people. This night about 650 rock fans sardined themselves into the Green Bay dinghole's last stand. The last time I saw the club that packed was for the Descendents reunion tour. Punker-types young and old poured out of the woodwork from all over the Midwest. The Speakeasy next-door started the constant flow of Pabst.

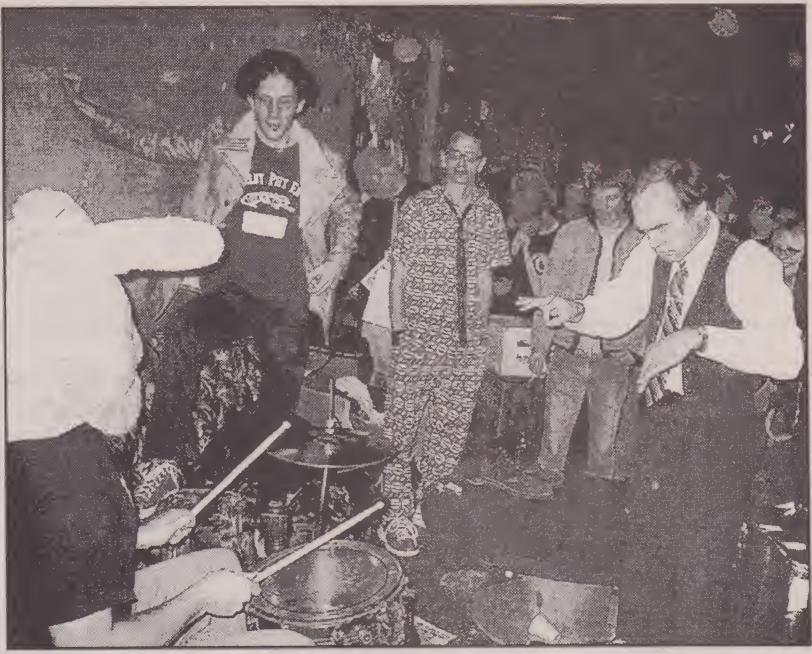
One of the more prominent fixtures at RNRHS in recent years was Jerry the doorman. Jerry collected money at the door and sometimes ran the show in Tom's absence. Jerry is in his upper forties, usually wears a tight suit and tie, and is the classical music expert at the main GB record store. Jerry knows more about classical music and composers than the rest of Wisconsin put together. Jerry is also quite opinionated, quite animated, and a little high-strung at times. I love the guy. All you have to do is tell him, "Yeah, Mahler wasn't THAT good!" and he'll explode into an arm-flailing foot-stomping tirade that will systematically prove you wrong. So here's this skinny wild tight tweed-suited classical music expert in his upper forties collecting money at the door of a grimy punk club. It's just SO PERFECT! It's SO Green Bay! He's always griping at the kids, "No exits! Once you're out, you're out!" and the kids just LOVE him! How could you not? Just another surreal aspect of this punk rock shrine.

The final show starts, the excitement accelerates, and the walls begin to sweat. The dinghole begins to itch and swell, spewing out steam into the Wisconsin December night. The Shut-ups warm up the stage and get things rockin'. The Methadones kick things up a notch, now with Teen Idol Matt on drums. The rock & ruckus is a'rollin'. Next up is Boris the Sprinkler. The Rockin' Reverend wrestles the door off the men's room toilet stall, drags it up onto the stage, and begins yelling,

"THE MEN'S TOILET STALL DOOR IS IN THE HOUSE! THE MEN'S TOILET STALL DOOR IS IN THE HOUSE!" I think you had to actually see it to appreciate the aesthetic ruckusness of it all. Punk ruckus! The Gaza Strippers play an amazing balls-out set that lives up to their name when Rick Sims strips down to his bare feet, bottoms, and shirtless to deliver the climax. The Gaza had the kids going ga-ga! Who could follow this? The fuckin' Turks, that's who! All fueled up on Speakeasy lunchboxes, the New Bomb Turks stretched the dinghole past the max.

Eric is like ten Chinese New Years crammed into one tightly wrapped Ohio firecracker! The dinghole creeks and moans. The capacity is breached grossly. Suddenly in the middle of the crowd, there arose such a clatter. 650 heads turn to witness ruckus anti-matter! The Rhythm Chicken paid homage to the "White House of Punk," the club that helped to hatch his very existence. Right in front of the soundboard, he filled the club with Chicken Rhythm. The applause was deafening..... okay, it was loud. The dinghole was now past the point of no return. Kansas were in the audience singing "How long.... How long....". I threw the Chicken kit in the corner and grabbed a few Pabsts next-door to lube up the aching dinghole. The Queers take the stage with the Methadones' Vapid and Matt in their lineup. The needle on the ruckus-meter is WAY past the red! The foundation starts to crumble. The Queers have the dinghole ripping at the seams! How much high-octane rock can one building take?! Eyes are clenched. Teeth are grinding. The dinghole pressure boiler finally blows its lid! The hymen is history! THIS IS IT! The Queers break into their final song, punkily enough titled, "This Place Sucks!"

Now the kids at RNRHS are quite hip and realize that, these days, body-passing is more suited for Pearl Jam concerts, Gap grand openings, and the ground floor at the NYSE..... but then it happens..... JERRY THE DOORMAN IS ON TOP OF THE CROWD! FUCKIN' ZANENESS!!! The kids are fighting with ear-to-ear smiles to keep him up, spin him around, and pass him to and fro. Jerry is beside himself,



flowing atop the crowd for the duration of the final song. The song ends, the kids go wild, and Jerry is passed up onto the stage. He raises a finger to the completely exhausted and rocked out crowd of punks standing in the shredded remnants of what was Green Bay's dinghole and says, "That was better than Great America!" The crowd goes ruckus-wild. You're right, Jerry. RockNRoll Highschool WAS better than Great America. Rest in post-ruckus peace my grimy old friend. Rest in pieces my dear departed dinghole.

(That was beautiful. I think I'm going to cry. — F.F.)

[That did bring a tear to my eye. I hate to interrupt such an emotional moment, Mr. Chicken, but you still haven't told us what a dinghole is. — Dr.S.]

—{Francis Funyuns shoves his fist up Sicnarf's dinghole}—

Rhythm Chicken

So how did you ever get to be a doctor, anyway?

<rhythmcchicken@hotmail.com>

all photos by Andy Junk





Squeeze My Horn

I'm an old man but I can still appreciate this comic. Hey, it's better than staring at muscle bound men in tights for too long.

Check it out! We all made it to 2002, a little scratched up, but we're all here. I must say, however, that Santa sort of missed a few things on my list. Let's see, first I asked for turn signals in and around the Cerritos area, or at least in those areas that I personally travel, because you know it's all about me. Santa failed miserably. Also, I asked that, at those lights on the way to work, that they be metered a little faster so that I'm not the only guy sitting at a red light by myself for two minutes at 5:45 in the A.M. while I watch an empty intersection. Didn't get that, either. I didn't even think of asking for peace, because that's a religious conflict that I just can't place a Christian icon like Santa in the middle of. I did, though, ask that customers where I work be a little less idiotic and a little more sympathetic toward us workers, seeing that we are basically on the bottom rung, we don't set the prices, we don't order the entire store, and we couldn't possibly know the price on thousands of products. Didn't happen! Asked for more time to get things done around my house. No! More vacation time. No! Now don't get me wrong, I wasn't completely greedy. I asked for things for others. For example for the President, I asked Santa to give him a sense of humor, a smile, and a brain, but seeing how I asked Santa and not the Wizard, this wish also feel through the cracks. Let's see who else...

mmmm, oh here's one, the guy who sells bootleg video at the comic show in Walnut, for him I asked to ease up and let people handle the product and not assume that everyone is a thief. Here is one that I

did get, for Britney Spears to wear tighter cloths, because she's on top of the drinking age. Now of all the things I asked for how is it that ole Saint Nick can get that one? Here's another good one, and I thought this one would be easy. I asked for the price of a round of golf to come down, and what happens? It goes up. Now let's take some time to figure this one out. If the course sends a foursome out every seven minutes, that's roughly eight foursomes an hour at \$120 a foursome. That's \$960 an hour. Mind you, that's a cheap course. Now, really, if I could show you a pie chart, I think a big piece is going to a glutton. Really, who are they paying? A sixteen year-old high

ties, the only light is in the clubhouse – not on the entire course; the food vendors make it off the \$5 hot dog and \$12 six pack of beer; and the Marshall gets paid in free golf. So that leaves us with the cost of water to be the biggie expense, and I don't think there's

Isn't there someone monitoring what sells? Secondly, what the hell are we going to do with the scourge called Wal-Mart? It seems odd to me that this devil can do so well, when they sell basically the same crappy products as K-Mart, who it just so happens is ready to file for bankruptcy. Now let me explain that, yes, I work in a Union shop and maybe I'm biased, but it is a known fact that the separation between rich and poor in this country is widening, but the poor continue to be poor by shopping at places like these, and when some piece of crap product falls apart, they go right back and buy some more. I'm not sky high on Sears, but when my hammer breaks, they'll replace it, so they get my business. Maybe people are just lazy. Look I'm just tossing around possible explanations, but I'm really perplexed as

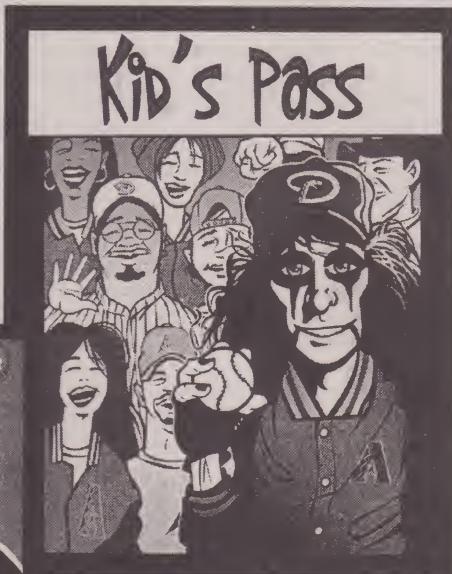
to why some people think that their actions, excuse me... that they don't think about what they're purchasing power is going to negatively effect. Of course, all my blabbing does nothing but make me look crazy, but at least I have this means of blowing off steam. So my answer to all the past problems and future ones that present themselves is Happy Fucking New Year. I'll be looking forward to wrestling with all of you for another year, and with some luck we'll right some of the wrongs. So, how 'bout them comics?

COOPERSTOWN
Phoenix, AZ

So, it's not a comic, but the kid's menu is sort of a comical character. This place belongs to that rock and roll sweetheart Alice Cooper. As one of the t-shirts quote, "Where jock and rock meet." This place is right off the



school kid making minimum wage to take your money; a group of two or three non-English speaking gentlemen to take care of the course (who are probably making less than that sixteen year-old kid); then you have utili-

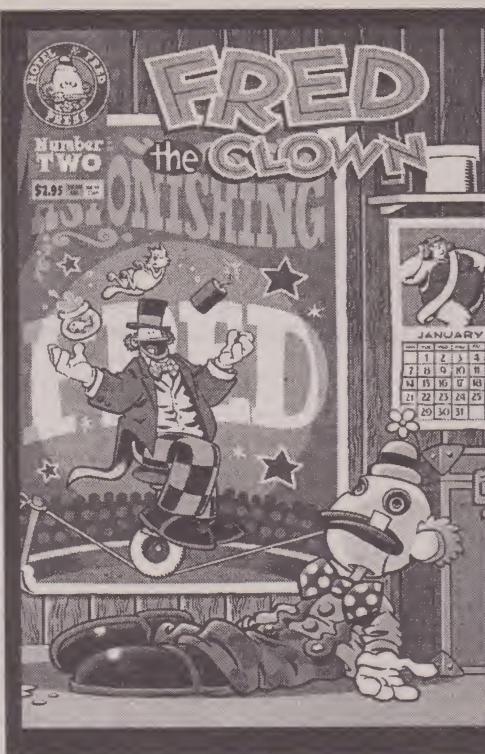


a course that spends \$500 an hour in water bills unless you're playing out of a boat. So yeah, I asked Santa for a lot of things, but I figured, like most kids, I'd get a couple of things off my list. So now that we're into the new year, things just seem to be getting worse. Yesterday I read that Toys R Us (sorry I can't get my R to reverse) is going to lay people off and close some stores. Why, you ask? Because they say they can't compete with Wal-Mart. Okay, first let's start with: if TRS would stock more of the toys that people want, for instance Simpson figures or DC comic characters instead of Spiderman in his soccer outfit or the beat-to-death X-men crap, they could make more money. Don't get me wrong, there needs to be kids stuff, too, but there's a lot of us older collectors out there.

60 freeway, right across the street from all the sports arenas in downtown Phoenix. It's really cool. There's an outdoor stage where bands can play, and the inside is kind of a Hard Rock Cafe meets the wall at Chicago's Wrigley field (brick). All over the walls are signed rock paraphernalia, and there's some sports stuff hanging around the register. The best is the black walls around the bathrooms that are virtually littered with silver sharpie signatures of rock personalities. I was going to try to sneak mine in and if they asked, I was going to tell them that I was the great writer of *Razorcake*, but I didn't think they would get the humor. Hell, the food was even good. It was a pretty straightforward menu with burgers and dogs, a little spaghetti, appetizers, the regular stuff, but a lot of the things had a story or personality behind it, and let's just say don't get the hot dog unless you're sure about it. Oh, and the servers have these black triangles painted under their eyes, but I wish he'd make em wear long black wigs too. So next time your traveling through Phoenix, stop off and check out the nightmarish grill of ole Alice, and maybe you should go at night. It might make the experience that much truer.

FRED THE CLOWN #2 \$2.95 U.S., \$4.45 CAN

What can I say? I've got a place in my heart for a drunk and a clown puppet. That's right, when I'm desperate for comics I'll usually pick it by the cover and something that I can relate to. This comic reads like a copy of *Mad Magazine*. Just look at it. It's to damn hard to explain but you'll know what I'm talking about when you read it. So moving on... At first I wasn't sure who Fred was, but after the drunk loses the dummy, I found that the drunk is Fred. After Fred loses the dummy, we find him doing a Valentines Day dance that concludes with a brick to the head. Next Fred is singing the blues. Go figure. Okay, at this point, nothing has made me laugh out loud, and I don't know if it is because I'm used to seeing this kind of behavior or I'm reading too fast, but I will say that I'm not hating it either. Then I turn the page and I find it: Fred is dressed like the pope and performing mass to ducks on a bridge, and to top it off it takes twenty-seven cops to bring the mass to an end. Oh



come on, it's religious humor, LAUGH! Now finally in the last remaining stories, it seems our boy Fred is having troubles romancing women so badly that they have to bring the cops back in. So, in short, this comic reminds me of a night in Hollywood when some drunk clowns almost got taken in for disorderly conduct. Wasn't Bob funny that night?! Ah, running in handcuffs, funny how one lacks speed when they can't move their arms. This one will grow on you, so go get a copy. (Hotel Fred Press, 132 Park Road, Chiswick, London W4 3HP, UK; <www.hotelfred.com>)

SUPERNATURAL LAW#32 \$2.50 U.S.

"Beware the Creatures of the Night — They have Lawyers." You now know why I made the purchase. Come on, a comic about lawyers that represent the likes of Dracula or the Invisible Man. You know you would buy it. The basics are, there's these two lawyers, Wolff & Byrd, yeah I know but there's a lot of play on words in this one. Anyway, it's this guy and this girl and, well, they basically represent the supernatural realm in the legal arena. The first case is that of Susan, the Muse of potboilers who is suing a mortal because he dumped her after he made millions off her work. Of course, the book she wrote him was done by someone else and the whole thing winds up in court for plagiarism. The cool thing about this Muse is that she

curse way too frequently, which I guess is why she's the Muse of potboilers. Of course, our Muse wins and soon the mortal is being chased for royalties by his *ghost* writer. Remember the play on words I was talking about? The next case is representation of something called a Dybbuk named Huberis. Does anyone out there know what kind of creature a Dybbuk is? He's this kind of warthog looking dude who can't work with women. I just don't know. Please enlighten me. Also in the office is Perry Otter, the young sorcerer, but don't get him mixed up with Harry Potter, no, no. Young Perry suffers from Sorcerer's Pteridae's Syndrome.

Yes, that's right, uncontrollable incantations and profanity. Actually, in the closing of this story, little Perry transports Mr. Byrd and a secretary to what looks like Grand Central with one of his outbursts. So let's wrap this up, shall we? The supernatural is cool. The law, interesting? Lawyers? Ehhh. But stir 'em all up in a cauldron and you've got one great comic. All right! (Exhibit A Press, 4657 Cajon Way, San Diego, CA 92115; <http://www.exhibitapress.com>)

SPIDDER#5 \$1 U.S.

I don't know what it is this month, but I've got a lot of comics with a supernatural theme. This one's a home press with ghost stories, comics, and reviews, none of which scare the fuck out me, but, hey, you're gonna have to pay more than a buck to have the fuck scared out of you. Got that one from a cool movie. In a quick wrap, there's a couple of werewolf stories, one about a turn of the century witch who wants to kill newborn children, and a quick history of the railroad tramp. The cool parts are the one-page comics of Scaredy Cat, who seems to meet with doomed fate in each, page. There's a review of basic drinks for your summertime pleasure, and they wrap it up their top music picks for this issue. Nutshell: not real scary stuff for a ghost story read, but there's some interesting nuts to be found herein. (Spider, 125 Cedar Crest

Circle, Auburn, AL 36830 or 223 Ford Court, Auburn, AL 36830)

THE ASSASSIN AND THE WHINER #13 \$1 U.S.

Keep your dollar on this one. Maybe I'm heartless, but I really can't get into a comic that deals with rape, alcoholism, and a vague hint of lesbianism. The troubled mental state of the character is just not enjoying to read or visualize. To call this a comic is an injustice. Do I want to help this person? No. Do I want to see this person go away? Yes. Maybe it's me, through all the dehumanization of television and seeing this topic almost daily, I just don't give a rat's ass. There I said it. Blackball me if you will, but I think I've seen enough. (Carrie McNinch, PO Box 481051, LA, CA 90048; <asswhine@hotmail.com>)

HEROBEAR AND THE KID#4 \$3.50 USA

Ahhh, if I could be a kid again. Well, read this comic and back you go. It has Disney flair without the Disney byproducts. This one has a cool story line. The Kid is a dreamer, and his Grandfather left him a stuffed bear that turns into a ten foot tall bear and a watch that tells good and bad. It also had mysterious secret passageways and all that good stuff that we wanted when we were kids. The art work on this is awesome. It's just rough pencil sketch with just the touch of red in the bear's cape. The bullies from school are drawn in such a way that you believe they could take the lug nuts off your car with their bare hands. This kid even has a love interest. At the beginning we're introduced to a character who knows about the bear and, well, I think he's one of the bad guys. But hey, it's almost cool the way this comic leaves you hanging and wanting to know things. I think I'm gonna run this one by my nephew and see what the kids perspective is on it. That's right, I'm an old man but I can still appreciate this comic. Hey, it's better than staring at muscle bound men in tights for too long. So I'm giving this book two hands up 'cause that's all I've got. If you've got free time and a big heart, go find a copy of *Herobear and the Kid*, if not, well, find something to do and leave me alone. (Astonish Comics, 10061 Riverside Drive Suite #785, Toluca Lake, CA 91602; <www.theastonish-factory.com>)

—Gary Hornberger

Gary Hornberger



ADOLESCENTS

INTERVIEW AND PHOTOS
BY MONEY

STILL RIPPIN'

It's hard to believe it's been twenty years since The Adolescents Blue Album was released. It's one of the defining records of early O.C. punk, the lynchpin between fellow Fullerton bands Social Distortion and Agent Orange. The power of their first and last full-length is enormous. Part of that has to do with the fact that the band broke up (imagine if there were only one Ramones record?), but songs like "Kids from the Black Hole" and "L.A. Girl," "Rip it Up" and "Word Attack" are just as strong, sophisticated and full of pathos as they were twenty years ago. If there had been no Blue Album, "Amoeba" would still be a hit today. Considering how much water has passed under the bridge, it's amazing the original lineup was able to get back together and do a mini-reunion tour. I caught two of the shows, one at the Galaxy in Santa Anna and one at the Key Club in Hollywood.

S: How did this VH1 thing get set up?

Steve: They're doing a thing on Orange County. They saw that we were playing. And I guess we were the lone Orange County band that was playing the week they were going to be out here. They contacted Jim Kaa (from The Crowd). They had a list of bands they wanted to talk to. We were one them. The Vandals. TSOL. The Crowd. Adolescents. They're also talking to The Offspring. No Doubt. They're touching on all kinds of ways that Orange County has influenced America. Hurley. Black Flys.

Casey: The whole net jerk.

S: How did the Class of '77 show go?

Steve: That was a lot of fun. I had a great time.

Rikk: It was literally like a class reunion.

S: But it was more than that. You have to include the class of '80, and the class of '81...

Steve: Yeah, I was listening to Boston in '77.

Casey: Yeah, the class of '79, '80, whatever. It was great seeing all those bands, hearing all those bands again. It was fun to see everybody again.

Razorcake 30 **S:** Do you think shows like

that are vital, or is it just a bunch of people wanking off, a big nostalgia trip.

Rikk: It was kind of like giving the new generation a taste of it. If anything, it was about having to come back and show them what it was all about. All these other bands that are coming out that, god bless 'em, but they ain't got the original spunk like all these bands do.

Casey: A lot of bands in the day had more integrity than the bands out nowadays. Back in the day, all those bands that played the El Rey show had integrity because they were living for the new movement, and now it's kind of lost that. The show re-admitted what the real vibe was in the old days in the '80s. It was really cool. It was one of the best evenings I've had in my life. It was killer.

Rikk: A lot of the kids are hungry for that. They get into the new stuff and, right away, they want to see where the roots came from. They get into the old stuff, and they really wish they could see those bands once again, and this gives them a chance. Most of those bands, like us, really haven't lost much of anything. If anything we've gained a little maturity.

Casey: Everyone sounded pretty much like

they used to. The kids just want to see what it looked like, to experience, to feel the bands their parents or older brothers or whatever liked. Just seeing the bands. It was way cool.

Tony: They all took their own unique experience from it. For me, it's like going to see someone like Dick Dale. Certainly he's not making records like he used to, he's not playing guitar like he used to, but it's a different experience. I've got all my years of how I interpret all those songs and what I get out of it. So when I go see him, the thing is this thing came out of a time before, before I was a teenager, but I can go and I can enjoy this stuff and be in the now with these songs from thirty or forty years ago. And that's fun. That's a fun thing. A neat thing. A fun experience. I like to see stuff like that occasionally. From my viewpoint as a musician, it was really fun to see everyone again. It's a drag. Some of us aren't here anymore. We go and we get together and we can see how each other are doing. Some of us may not have seen each other in ten or fifteen years.

Casey: It's refreshing.

Tony: It's a re-affirmation of who we are.

Rikk: So in some ways, I guess that's getting together and wanking off.

\$: Did you see or hear anything that really surprised you?

Rikk: Some people who are still alive.

Casey: They way all the music has remained the same. The exact same points were being put across then as they are now, and they're still having the same amount of impact socially that they had when we made up the concepts. It's all coming around full circle. Everything is coming true that we said back in the early punk days, politically or socially. It's kinda cool. Like, we told you so.

Tony: I heard something that surprised me. I heard someone say something about bouncers all being assholes. I'd talked to one of the bouncers about keeping an eye on my daughter for a few minutes. I asked that he make sure she didn't get knocked off the cabinet. Now I'd heard somebody talking that they're assholes, these guys are assholes. What a drag. If you think about it, they're perceived as this authoritarian kind of unit and so people automatically assume that they're assholes. It's just an interesting thing to hear these punks, who are supposed to be so accepting of people, are discounting another human being without ever speaking to him. But they're not racists. This person is not a racist. And they're not this or that. And this person doesn't generalize. That was something that surprised me.

Steve: Just because he's The Man.

Tony: It's just kind of a drag. I expect more from people than that.

\$: Also, who's really the bad guy, the bouncer or the person who oversells the show so there's total chaos in the pit?

Tony: Or the guy in the pit who creates the situation that gets the bouncer's attention.

Steve: You don't bang your head against the wall or stick your hand in a fire because you know the outcome. And if you jump up

onstage, you know those guys are going to grab you, manhandle you, and throw you out. But it's funny, because you still see kids doing it. You know, if someone gets up, does their business, and dives off I don't care, you know what I mean?

Tony: Not me. People don't pay to see these guys jump up and get in the way. I'm sorry. That's my stage. I'm the show.

Steve: Well see, that's you're, you know...

Tony: Stay out of my fucking way. Stay out of my goddam way.

Casey: A lot stage divers disregard mic stands and musicianship. I just don't like it.

Steve: Just don't touch me.

Tony: I've had my teeth broken. Some knucklehead who thinks he's having a good time while I'm singing, flips his arm up, smacks the microphone into my face, breaks my tooth in half, and I have to spend \$700 the next day in emergency surgery to put my tooth back together. That's a drag.

Casey: But what a great story!

Rikk: I keep waiting for someone with a SAG (Screen Actors Guild) card to come up to me after the show with an invoice. I was up there for twenty-three seconds, where's my cut?

Tony: I think people should just get up on the side and throw fish. And another thing. These guys with the big spikes on their heads.

Casey: Liberty spikes.

Tony: I think they should have games where they throw horseshoes on that shit from the crowd. Let's make this interesting. Jumping off the stage, that's old fool. Let's do something a little new fool. Let's have some fun. Let's make a game out of it.

Rikk: Liberty toss.

Casey: Pin the tail on the punky.

\$: When's the next Adolescents gig?

WHERE I WENT TO SCHOOL, THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO DID NOT GIVE ME A HARD TIME... WERE THE CHICANOS. THE CHICANOS DIDN'T CARE ABOUT US ONE WAY OR THE OTHER. EVERYBODY ELSE? THEY HATED US

Tony: This one.

\$: That's it?

Tony: Yeah.

Casey: We're just going with the flow. We seem to be getting a good response off of our music. That's what we're into it for, not to be rock stars. We're into it for what it sounds like and having fun. And a lot of people coming to see us are having fun, too. It's great.

Tony: We have this show. And we have something planned for the middle of next year. It's nice to get together with these guys. We grew up together. We all live in different places. Like any family you go in different directions but when you finally get together you're like, hey we have something in common.

Casey: I love you, Tony.

Tony: I love you, too, Russian.

\$: When you play these songs do you ever think, man, we were just fucking kids when we did this! And people still want to hear it because they're still great songs.

Tony: Yeah. Another thing that surprised me at that show was I didn't have to sing the lyrics because I could hear them louder in the audience than I could in my head when I was singing them. The audience was singing louder than me. That was great. That was bitchin'.

Casey: At the Galaxy show, when we opened with "Kids from the Black Hole," that guitar riff, the audience just started roaring.

Tony: It was just weird.



DRUMMER CASEY ROYER THEN (ABOVE) AND NOW (LEFT)

BASSIST STEVE SOTO THEN (BELOW) AND NOW (RIGHT)





Casey: It felt like Kiss at the Forum. That excitement.

\$: That Galaxy show was the best show of the year.

Casey: That was the moment of total fun.

Tony: These songs are really important to us. (To Casey) I'm sorry I didn't mean to cut in like that.

Casey: That's it, I quit! The Galaxy show was killer. The Galaxy is a pretty centralized location in Orange County to the areas we all ran around in when we were growing up. It's a great venue, so when people heard about it...

\$: Everybody came out of the woodwork.

Casey: Everybody. It was a special night. I think it was one of the best gigs I've ever seen in Orange County. There was a vibe in there. People walked out of that place just laughing and singing and talking. I couldn't believe it. A phenomenon.

Tony: Yeah, it's great when you can bring people together like that. I didn't see any fights or anything like that. It felt really nice and healthy. I was disappointed in the way some of the security reacted to some of the kids.

\$: Yeah, you stopped right in the middle of "Amoeba."

Tony: Bottom line: there were a couple of escorts out that were totally unnecessary for somebody just getting on stage. I'm sorry, they do get in the way, but we don't need to see anyone get their neck bro-

ken over it, you know what I'm saying? There was just some really poor escorts. But back to the material, these songs are all important to us. This is our history.

\$: Did you guys first start playing out at the Renaissance Café?

Steve: Yeah.

Tony: I wasn't in the band yet. I was an audience member.

Steve: That's where I met Tony. I was in Agent Orange. Rikk and I, when we met Tony. Rikk and Tim Mags used to take Agent Orange up to Hollywood because we were only fifteen and couldn't drive. And I remember driving up there and going "Somebody should start a band with Tony, because he's gotta be in a band. He's this insane kid who's been coming to these shows. It's gotta fucking happen."

Tony: They felt sorry for me. He's gonna go off the deep end. We gotta save this poor kid.

Steve: Rikk and them got the Detours back together, and I was like, fuck it, I'm starting a band with Tony.

\$: How long did the scene at the Renaissance last?

Steve: It was pretty short.

Tony: Six months.

Steve: There was a time at a show when the owner shut the power off.

Casey: The Potty Women (Naughty Women).

Rikk: That was the Assistance League. They were tearing up pictures of porn and throwing it at people.

Steve: That's when I first got to know Tony. We were sitting at a table by candlelight waiting for the power to come back on.

Tony: I was the resident lunatic.

\$: What was it about the scene at Mike Ness's apartment, a.k.a. the Black Hole, that inspired such a profound song?

Steve: That song is exactly how it was there. Rikk described that scene perfectly. If you listen to the song, that's what it was. Everything that's in that song went down there. You could open the bedroom door and someone's screwing somebody. People are wasted everywhere.

Tony: The place smelled like piss, stale beer and fuck.

Johnny Random: That's the way a studio should smell like.

Rikk: This was a home.

\$: A house not a home.

Tony: Everybody who relates to the song has a place like that in their past so they can relate to that on some kind of level.

Understand that this was a central meeting place for a number of people who were social, and in many cases, family rejects. This was a place where they could go and have a camaraderie and listen to music. We did have a culture and a lifestyle that was different from everyone in the county around us. So it was a place where we could get together. I think Rikk did a really good job of describing the whole vibe of the place. He's not given the credit as the historian that he is. But he did a really good job of analyzing something that was beyond the comprehension of most people. If he hadn't written it down in the way that he did, we wouldn't have been able to revisit it as many times as we all have, because there really was some magic there.

Rikk: Same with Playpen.

Tony: Mike Ness did the same thing with Playpen, which I want to point out that I wrote the second verse.

Casey: No way! I was in on writing that one, too.

Tony: I did "losing battles, losing fights. The police will never take away our..."

Steve: You didn't like The Man, either. You're like the little punk rock kid who doesn't like the bouncer.

\$: Reading interviews and oral histories of the Orange County punk rock scene, I get a sense that it was a lot more dangerous to be a punk rocker in places like Fullerton than, say, Hollywood.

Rikk: Yeah it was.

Steve: I don't want to sound like grandpa punker and how I used to have to walk uphill both ways to school in the snow and blah blah blah. But sometimes I just want to say to these kids, I got my ass beat for you. It's true.

Casey: But the thing is, we were having fun and having a good time with our standpoint. We're just happy to be teaching people and letting them know where we're coming from. Kids nowadays are good. Kids back then were good.

\$: Is it true you guys got kicked out of Disneyland?

Rikk: They wouldn't let us in.

Tony: They wouldn't let us past the gate.

Rikk: I was dressed normal as possible. I just had a shaved head, a white t-shirt on, and jeans.

Casey: I kept falling down. They thought I was Dopey, so I got in.

Rikk: It was me, and my date at the time, Karen. Japanese Karen. Mike Ness and Michelle Bell. Mike had a beret and a sweatshirt. And we were clean. Just two couples who wanted to go to Disneyland. And they were like, no. You can't come in. So we went to Knot's Berry Farm instead.

Casey: The Knot's family was always much more accepting.

Tony: When things really started to take off and the band started getting some radio play, we started playing some big parties in Garden Grove. We played two parties within a week that were like half a block from each other. And just to show you how

things had turned around, at the first party we played, the people at the party actually lifted me up and threw me into the drum kit, just knocking everything over, and gave us about fifteen minutes to get our gear packed up and get out of the party or they were going to kick our asses. At the next party, the entire block broke into a riot, with the police coming. Punks and longhairs fighting each other. I wouldn't say they were longhairs, more like jocks and rednecks. They were rednecks. It turned into a fight between them and the punks and, when the police came, everyone was either running or fighting with police. It just completely erupted. But the thing is, it never happened if they didn't have the numbers. My younger brother Troy — he committed suicide on November 20, 2001 — was riding his bike and a car pulled up and the guy stuck his leg out the window and kicked him in the head and knocked him off his bike. He fell. They pulled over, parked the car so he couldn't get away and got out. They picked him up, and he was totally punch-drunk, dazed, and they ripped the earrings out of his ears and proceeded to beat the shit out of him right there in the street. And nobody did anything. Nobody stopped. It was just allowed to happen because we were freaks in their perception. And to be honest, where I went to school, the only people who did not give me a hard time, besides the Russian, were the Chicanos. The Chicanos didn't care about us one way or the other. Everybody else? They hated us.

Casey: That's cool!

Tony: The Chicanos were always really cool. They thought it was kind of cool. They liked the clothes. They liked that it was anti- what was going on.

S: Like, why would anyone intentionally marginalize themselves?

Tony: They thought it was pretty cool that we weren't like the other asshole white

boys.

Tony: Even Rikk's cousin beat me up.

Rikk: Did you know he's a detective now?

Casey: Figures. Makes sense to me. Beat up Tony, become a cop.

Tony: There was no instigation at all. The real problems that existed for us was poor white trash thinking that they could stop a movement with sheer stupidity. And a couple of really poorly placed punches. I'm glad it's not like that anymore. No one should be stomped on for simply existing. And that's how it was. One day I'd gotten paid for an Adolescents show. I made like \$35 dollars and I was jazzed. So I went to a Pioneer Chicken and bought me a box of chicken. And on my way home, I kid you not, this Riverside reject, toothless speed freak, I don't know why he wanted my chicken, but he did. He comes up to me and is like, "Hey, come here, kid, come here!" So I start walking real fast. He came up and grabbed me by the scruff of my neck and dragged me out of the street. This is the corner of Katella and Magnolia. Pretty big intersection. This is going on. People can see what's happening. No one does a thing. He goes, "What's wrong with you?" I say, "Nothing's wrong with me." "What is your problem?" "I don't have a problem." So he takes my chicken. He punched me in the face and told me that if I didn't leave, he'd finish pummeling me. Coward that I am, I split. And to this day, I am so bummed about him taking my chicken. He stole my chicken! And stuff like that happened all the time. He took my chicken! Bastard. I'll never forget him.

S: The early Hermosa Beach scene, like Black Flag, they get a lot of flak for not taking responsibility for the violence at their shows.

Tony: Culturally, if you look at Manhattan Beach and Hermosa Beach in the early '80s. They were artists. The people in those com-

munities were pretty laid back. They were not high-strung, uptight people.

S: Like they are now.

Tony: It was a laid back kind of community. They were not the kind of band or the kind of people to intervene. They were there to work hard and build up their band. And that's what they did. They didn't intercede. They didn't stop anything. It wasn't their business. They were a rock band. And that's what they did. Because, really, where they were from, the kind of people that they were, determined the kind of band that they became.

Rikk: They had the right beat, the right tone, the right notes.

Tony: They were great. That's the thing. They were different from their music. It really does just make you want to go "Raaaarrrrrr!"

S: So you think that's a revisionist bad rap?

Tony: I really do. They're not historians. They don't look at the social context of where these people came from at all.

Rikk: If you take Black Flag apart person by person, they're just cool people. Greg. Chuck...

Tony: Totally. Their whole thing was making their band move. They deserve all the early success that they got because they worked their asses off to get it.

Rikk: They opened up everywhere.

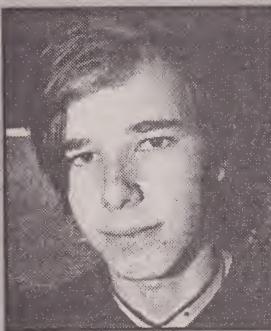
Casey: Sick-cess.

S: Has Casey always been called "The Russian?"

Casey: Uh, yes. We'll say, yes. Let's go with, yes. Seriously, we've called each other Russian spies just joking around for years. It's like a parody of our own loony-tune lifestyle.

S: Did you start playing in Hollywood after you got exposure on the radio?

Casey: We were pretty much playing in Hollywood before we got any recognition at all. Our friend Eddie Subtitle, who was our



GUITARIST FRANK AGNEW THEN (ABOVE) AND NOW (RIGHT)



GUITARIST RIKK AGNEW THEN (BELOW) AND NOW (LEFT)



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manager, had friends who lived in LA. The underground scene was kind of growing. He saw potential. He thought we were fun. And we were all having a good time. We got involved in the LA scene before we got any record deals. Lisa Fancher approached us at the Starwood. The LA circuit.

Rikk: Hong Kong Cafe, Starwood.

\$: Who were some of the early LA bands you played with?

Steve: One of the first shows we did was with the Germs.

Casey: Black Flag, Circle Jerks. All the names.

Tony: We played with The Crowd.

Casey: It goes on and on.

Tony: DOA. They were really more of a West Coast/Los Angeles band than a Canadian band. At least in 1980. Because they spent so much time down here.

\$: I want each of you to tell me something that you've done in the last twenty years that would totally shock an Adolescents fan.

Rikk: I became a father.

Tony: I started eating my vegetables.

Casey: That our stupid little neighborhood, anarchy, brotherhood band would become world famous and that everybody believes that what we have to say has a pertinence to them. It's the weirdest thing.

Steve: I think what he's asking is, what's going to burn out the little punker guy. Like you were secretly going to church.

Casey: Oh. Sex with animals, stuff like that?

Steve: They probably expect that from us.

Tony: Here's something. I've spent the last two years converting to Catholicism. That might surprise people.

\$: Really?

Tony: Um-hmm.

\$: It surprises me.

Tony: I've spent the last two years, Wednesdays and Sundays, studying the Bible and going through the adult process of becoming a Catholic.

Casey: Right, right, right. Makes sense.

\$: Do you still teach special education?

Tony: Not anymore.

\$: Kind of an odd profession for someone who used to belt out "I Hate Children".

Tony: There's a context to the song that a lot of people don't know about. Besides the fact that me and Steve thought it was the funniest song in the world when we sat there on the phone writing it. There was a situation when I was on my way to class to learn how to be a printer, which never quite happened. On my way, this father and mother, they were young, probably eighteen or nineteen years old, and the baby was crying. The father kept yelling at the mother, she's flinching, the baby's crying. And he's like, "Fuck! I hate children!" What a great line. So I tried it out on my own brothers and sisters as soon as I got home. "Man, I hate children!" Steve thought it was hilarious.

Steve: We were on the phone and they were all screaming and yelling and Tony goes: "Everybody shut the fuck up!" And he got back on the phone in a totally calm voice, "I hate children."

Rikk: We don't play it anymore.

Tony: No, we don't.

Casey: We should change it to "We Hate You."

Steve: I'm the only one without children, so I'll play the song solo acoustically.

\$: On VH1.

Steve: Yeah.

\$: What is the inspiration for your most famous song "Amoeba"?

Tony: Casey wrote that.

Casey: That's right. Casey Royer, R-O-Y-E-R. I wrote it in high school biology class while I was in Social Distortion. If you notice, "A-tom Bomb, T-N-T" is the same as "A-moe-ba, A-moe-ba" I made the song up about the amoeba which we were learning about for the first time.

Rikk: We thought it would be such a neat thing. I did a re-write of the music so that it would be ours completely.

Casey: It was a funny thing. A silly thing, because we were into silly stuff.

\$: What are some bands that you played with that don't get the recognition they deserve.

Casey: Every band we've ever played with falls into that category.

Steve: King Quail, The Crowd.

Tony: The Crowd, definitely. The ADZ.

Rikk: The Weirdos.

Casey: The Dead Boys, The Stiv Bators, The Damned. They had way more talent than they get recognition for.

\$: You played with The Damned?

Casey: No, they did their own deals.

Rikk: The Ramones.

Casey: We played with the Ramones. We played with the Bad Brains.

Tony: How about that D.I. band?

\$: So is this VH1 thing going to be an entire show about Orange County or some six-and-a-half minute segment squeezed between commercials?

Tony: I don't trust TV people at all.

Casey: They have their own agenda. We're all just being used.

Tony: I'm not a machine!

Casey: I'm not an elephant man!

Tony: *Elephant Man* is out on DVD. That was the movie that made me want to work with people with disabilities. It made me cry. The first time I saw that. Bawled my head off. It's a pretty serious movie. Sit down. Lock the world out. It's an intense movie. You know, I felt like that. *The Wall*, too. I could really relate to that movie, the isolation. Isolation can make you do one of two things: it can make you frustrated and want to break things like the guy in *The Wall* does, or on the other hand, just break down internally like John Merrick did.

Casey: I thought the elephant man really liked the man who owned the hospital because he was a smart gentleman.

Tony: Sometimes Russian says things that make me laugh so hard I wet myself.

Casey: And Tony, in essence, makes me potty uncontrollably. The next time I play drums, I'm just going to wet myself. I never tried that. Just throw water on myself?

Tony: Like Ozzy?

Casey: Ozzy's a wee-wee lover? Did you hear that? Ozzy's a wee-wee lover!

Jim Kaa [entering]: Ozzy's gay?

Casey: No, he just likes to splash his wee-wee while he's playing!

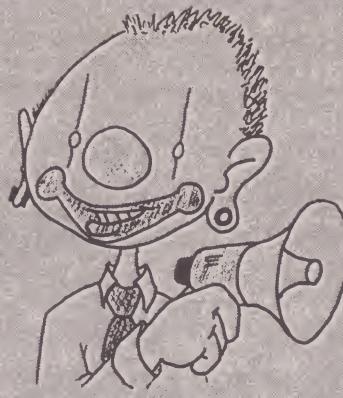
Tony: Look what you've started.

Casey: That's pretty much what we're all about.



SINGER TONY
CADERNA THEN
(ABOVE) AND NOW
(RIGHT)

WEEDS FROM THE UNDERGROUND



A CLOSER LOOK AT INDEPENDENT BOOK PUBLISHING

BY SEAN CARSWELL

CLOWN SKETCH BY BEN JONES
PHOTOS BY SEAN AND TODD

A LITTLE TUFT

"I like it when a flower or a little tuft of grass grows through a crack in the concrete. It's so fuckin' heroic." — George Carlin

I've been noticing a lot more independent books lately. It's like anything else: you don't realize that a subculture exists, then something draws your attention to one small part of it, and suddenly, it's all around you. You see it everywhere. You realize it's been there all along, and you wonder why you never noticed it before. Strolling around the Underground Press Conference in Bowling Green, Ohio, passing table after table of zines, I was suddenly confronted with Jim Munroe's book, *Angry Young Spaceman*. Wandering through the Alternative Press Conference, passing table after table of comic books, I stumbled across Manic D Press and their impressive catalog of books. I've noticed that more punk rock zines now have book review sections sandwiched between the music and zine reviews. *Maximum Rocknroll*'s book review section grows a little each year. More review copies of books have been showing up in the *Razorcake* mailbox. More and more mom-and-pop record stores are dedicating a shelf, then a couple of shelves, then whole sections to independent books. It's growing. Independent books are squeezing into all kinds of unlikely places. They're like the weed that rises up from the underground, pushing its way through a crack in the concrete, establishing a solid root system and beginning to blossom.

Being the huge fan of books that I am, I'm pretty stoked about all of this. It's time to take a closer look at some of these independent authors and presses.

HISTORY OF THE UNORTHODOX

The recent independent book movement didn't come out of a void. Nothing ever does. There's actually a long history of radical and fringe writers publishing their own books. One of the earliest and most famous examples of an American self-publisher is Henry David Thoreau, who is now considered one of the most important figures in American literature. He was one of the most lucid and influential thinkers in American history, and even now, a hundred and forty years after Thoreau's death, most of his ideas still ring true. It's nearly impossible to read *Walden* without underlining at least one sentence per page and memorizing a quote or two to help you through your daily life. ("Beware of the enterprise that requires new clothes," is my personal favorite. It may not be as deep or philosophical as most of what Thoreau wrote, but it's kept me in jeans and t-shirts all these years.)

When Thoreau was alive, though, he was pretty much regarded as a kook. His ideas were too unconventional, and he had trouble getting published. Thoreau published only two books during his lifetime: *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* and *Walden*. No publisher wanted to touch Thoreau's first book, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*. They believed that his views were too unorthodox, especially with regard to religion. So Thoreau published it himself. He printed something like a thousand books, sold only a couple hundred of them, then went on to brag that he had a personal library of over seven hundred books, most of which he wrote. Thoreau's jokes aside, though, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* did serve as the precursor to Thoreau's masterpiece, *Walden*. And, a hundred and fifty years after Thoreau couldn't give the book away, *A Week* is still in print.

Several big time American writers since Thoreau

have decided to publish books themselves rather than compromise their controversial views, writers like Mark Twain and Upton Sinclair. But independent publishing as we know it began with the "beat" poets and writers.

As most of you know, the beat (or beatnik) movement had a lot in common with the punk rock movement, only a couple of generations earlier. Like punks, the beats spent a lot of time hanging out in clubs or bars; listening to music that the mainstream dismissed as too wild; drinking heavily; working various shit jobs; travelling randomly across the country in run down cars or by hopping freight trains; setting up shows for one another; and nurturing an underground community. The beat movement also produced some of the best writers and poets in America: writers like Jack Kerouac and William S. Burroughs; poets like Gregory Corso, Gary Snyder, Allen Ginsberg, and Denise Levertov. The writers and poets went on to turn the American literary community on its ass — selling literally millions of books, winning Pulitzer Prizes, and forever changing the way people wrote — but when they were starting out, no mainstream publisher was interested in them. Jack Kerouac spent seven years trying to sell his second novel, *On the Road*, to a New York publisher. Most publishers wouldn't even read his work because his first novel, *The Town and the City*, hadn't sold enough copies. They also wouldn't read his work because Kerouac was such an unconventional guy. *On the Road* probably never would've been published — much less sell over a million copies and become the classic novel that it's become — if not for the actions of other beat poets, specifically Allen Ginsberg and Lawrence Ferlinghetti.

Ferlinghetti owned a bookstore in San Francisco called City Lights¹. A lot of the beats would hang out at there, and would often perform their poetry. Ferlinghetti knew that his City Lights friends were writing some original and groundbreaking stuff, but Ferlinghetti was also savvy enough to know that his friends' writings were too original and groundbreaking for mainstream publishers. So, in 1955, Ferlinghetti created City Lights Publishers and released *Pictures of a Gone World*, a small book of poems that he had written. The book sold well and inspired Ferlinghetti to continue publishing small books of poetry. Within a year, City Lights released two more books that sold a respectable number. Then came City Lights' fourth book of poetry, Allen Ginsberg's *Howl and Other Poems*. *Howl* was a vicious attack on conservative mainstream America and the ways that the Eisenhower years were devouring everything that was creative or free thinking. Ginsberg's early readings of *Howl* in the basement of the City Lights Bookstore were every bit as revolutionary and influential as those first Ramones shows at CBGBs. *Howl* made Ginsberg and City Lights Publishers instantly famous². Suddenly, this ragged group of friends hanging out at the local bookstore were a "movement." They had a name (the Beat Generation) and they now had their first spokesman, Allen Ginsberg. Shortly after the success of *Howl* shook the literary world, the big New York publishers were getting back in touch with Kerouac, eager to publish *On the Road*. This is an early example of a model we've all grown used to: the underground comes up with something fresh and vital, and as soon as it starts making money, big business tries to cash in.

Nonetheless, City Lights Publishers and the Beat Generation produced some of the coolest stuff to come out of the fifties, and they forever changed the face of American literature for the better.

A decade after *Howl* was released, Charles Bukowski was an



(ABOVE) INDIE PRESS AUTHOR RICH MACKIN PERFORMING BETWEEN BANDS.
THAT'S BOB TILTWHHEEL CRACKING UP IN THE BACK.

unknown writer struggling to be heard. He'd been writing for years, and occasionally, he'd get poems or short stories published in magazines and literary journals. For the most part, though, no publisher would seriously invest in Bukowski because he wrote about drinking too much and gambling too much, about living his life in dive bars, about getting into fights, dating insane women, and being a bit insane himself. He was a voice for the ignored and downtrodden people in our society. And Bukowski, himself, was ignored and downtrodden. Then, John Martin came along.

Martin was a fan of Bukowski's writing. He couldn't understand why publishers wouldn't touch Bukowski's books, so Martin decided to do something about it. In 1966, Martin formed Black Sparrow Press. Black Sparrow was launched specifically to publish Bukowski's work. Their first release was *At Terror Street and Agony Way*, a book of Bukowski's poems. Between *At Terror Street* and Bukowski's regular column in *Open City* (a Los Angeles-based underground newspaper), Bukowski quickly developed a following. Readers loved Bukowski's raw writing style and his base subject matter. They loved reading about fighting, degenerates, abuse, and illness. Readers hadn't seen anyone who wrote like Bukowski. They were reading his stuff for the first time, and they loved it. And readers still love it today. Pick up any zine in any record store, or walk into any creative writing class, and you'll find at least one person there who's trying to write like Bukowski. Walk into pretty much any punk house or any slacker's apartment and you'll find at least one book of Bukowski's poems. Hell, even one of the biggest underground bands today, Hot Water Music, stole their name from the title of a Bukowski book. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

At Terror Street created such a stir that Black Sparrow dedicated themselves to promoting the writings of Charles Bukowski. Over the course of the next thirty-four years, Black Sparrow went on to publish more than thirty books by Bukowski. The Bukowski books sold so well that they allowed Black Sparrow the financial freedom to publish whatever else they wanted. They took advantage of that freedom and established a tradition of publishing eclectic and risky titles by some really cool authors like Diane Wakoski, Robert Creeley, and Andrei Codrescu. And over the last few years, Black Sparrow has taken advantage of that freedom by re-releasing the works of John Fante — the writer who Bukowski cites as his biggest influence.

Of course, City Lights and Black Sparrow weren't the only independent publishers born out of the fifties and sixties. They're just two of the biggest and most successful independent publishers of their era. They're also two publishers that established the model that so many contemporary independent presses follow³.

THE PUNKS GET IN THE MIX

The obstacles that writers like Allen Ginsberg and Charles Bukowski faced were pretty typical. Since the earliest days of the print-

ing press, there have been writers who want to push their art in new, risky, unconventional directions, and there have been publishers who understand that printing books costs a lot of money, so they're only willing to print books that are similar to books that have sold well in the past. This clash has existed as long as books have existed. Things got worse for writers in the eighties, though, when a few large corporations hijacked the book industry. These same large corporations⁴ were in the process of taking over all of the mass media: music, magazines, movies, television, newspapers, and books. With this conglomeration of the book industry, all hope of publishers nurturing writers and developing unique voices pretty much flew out the window. These companies were (and are) concerned solely with profit. The quality and originality of the books being released after these corporations took over the book industry quickly degenerated⁵.

Luckily, an answer to this problem already existed. When big corporations took over the music industry, musicians started their own record labels, released their own music, and took a chunk of the music industry back. When big corporations took over the magazine industry, writers started their own magazines and zines, released their own work, and took a chunk of the magazine industry back. These indie labels, magazines, and zines created a support system within themselves which allowed them all to exist on the fringes of society. (Obviously, you know this; you're reading one of those zines right now.) This support system also allowed independent book publishers to surface out of the underground.

Manic D Press was one of the first indie publishers to rise out of this underground. Manic D founder Jennifer Joseph wanted to get published and found that no publisher was interested in backing work by a young, unknown poet. So she decided to do it herself. Initially, she followed the City Lights example, hanging out at City Lights Bookstore and studying the design and layout of their books. She bought *The Publish-It-Yourself Handbook* by Bill Henderson, read it, figured out how to put her own book out, and, in 1984, she released the first Manic D title, *The Future Isn't What It Used To Be*. Success wasn't immediate for her like it was for Ginsberg and Bukowski. She wasn't able to find anyone to distribute her book, so she resorted to what she calls "the hoof-and-woof method of distribution." Like any kid with a fanzine would do, Joseph took her books to local independent book stores and put them on consignment, checking back regularly to see if any sold. Beyond that, she did whatever else she could to get the word out. Though *The Future* wasn't a runaway success, Joseph was inspired to continue publishing. She released several books and marketed them the same way indie record labels market their bands: she sent writers on national tours where they'd read their work in bars, clubs, bookstores, or wherever they could schedule a reading. She moved beyond the hoof-and-woof method and got picked up by Last Gasp Distribution and Small Press Distribution. And the do-it-yourself ethic worked for Joseph and the Manic D writers. They

were able to put out books that mainstream publishers weren't interested in, but readers loved. They were able to establish the foundation of an independent literary community. On a

AS MORE GOOD INDEPENDENT BOOKS GET RELEASED, READERS START TO UNDERSTAND THAT INDEPENDENCE FROM BIG MEDIA CORPORATIONS IS A CHOICE, NOT A FAILURE

small scale, it even started to pay off when, ten years after she started Manic D, Joseph signed a distribution deal with Publishers Group West. At that point, the company became profitable enough to be Joseph's main source of income.

Manic D may not be turning the literary world on its ass like the Beat Generation did, but they are "making the world safe for intelligent freaks and poets with a sense of humor."⁶ Manic D consistently publishes good books. They take risks that would scare most presses. They nurture their writers and allow their writers to expand and develop in unorthodox ways. And, though Manic D publishes a fairly diverse mixture of books, there's a definite sense of taste. If nothing else, when I see a Manic D book in a bookstore, I know that Jennifer Joseph recommends that book, and I know that she's a pretty good judge of writing. That's often a good enough reason for me to pick up a book. And it's these things — taking risks, nurturing writers, developing a sense of taste — that set an indie publisher apart from a big, corporate publisher.

These things make books exciting and vital.

Manic D has been around for almost twenty years now. And though Joseph still isn't making a whole lot of money off of it, she's excited about the future of independent publishing. "Fuck it," she told me, "I grew up in the suburbs and thought I was the only one interested in obscure novels and poetry — luckily, I found out I wasn't alone. By exporting alternative literary culture out to the far corners of America, we're letting people know it's okay to not conform to society's absurd constraints and to think for yourself."

Of course, Manic D isn't the only case of a publisher growing up from an underground community and using the model of indie music labels to build her business. On the other side of the coin from Manic D is Adam Parfrey. Inspired

by a love for unusual books and a dissatisfaction with mainstream publishing, Parfrey decided to take matters into his own hands. In 1986, he teamed up with Ken Swezey to form Amok Press. Together, they published eight books in two years. They also stirred up a lot of controversy. The first two books that Amok released were *Michael* — the novel written by Joseph Goebbels before he became the head propagandist for the Third Reich — and *Apocalypse Culture* — a collection of essays on necrophilia, murder, pornography, satanism, and GG Allin. Still, Amok Press managed to sell a lot of books and raise issues that mainstream publishers ignored.

Parfrey and Swezey lived on opposite coasts, though, and collaboration was tough. They decided to part ways in 1988. In 1989, Parfrey started Feral House Publishing. Feral House continued to publish fringe books. They kept the first *Apocalypse Culture* book in print, and Parfrey edited *Apocalypse Culture II*, which includes an essay on "the biological resurrection of Jesus Christ via modern cloning technology" and recipes for cooking babies. One of Feral House's biggest selling authors is the notorious Satanist, Anton LaVey. And Feral House published several other books about the occult, drugs, black metal, and conspiracy theory. Beyond the sensational and the blatant attempts to instigate the easily offended, Feral House has also put some very important books back in print. One of those books is *The X-Rated Bible*⁷, which examines all of the passages about sex and debauchery in the Holy Bible, and the other book is *The Bomb* by Frank Harris.

The re-issue of *The Bomb* is something that I find very interesting about Feral House for two reasons. First, a few years ago (before Feral House re-issued the book), I tried to find a copy of it, and I couldn't find one anywhere. With the help of my local librarian, we searched through the databases of every library system in the state of Florida and could only find one copy of the book. This amazed me. Frank Harris is a major figure in American literature, and *The Bomb* is his take on the Haymarket

ANGRY YOUNG SPACEMAN JIM MUNROE, TRYING TO CONVINCE PEOPLE TO TEACH ENGLISH ON OTHER PLANETS.



Affair, which, though it's largely ignored, is an immensely important event in American history⁸. So it's great that this book is back in print. It's an interesting re-issue for a second reason, though. When I spoke with Adam Parfrey, he told me that the *Apocalypse Culture* books and the Anton LaVey books more or less kept him in business. He also told me that it's extremely difficult for Feral House to break even and keep going year after year. These two things — coupled with the knowledge that *The Bomb* was written over a hundred years ago and is a pretty obscure book — suggest that *The Bomb* doesn't sell all that well. That's when I realized that books on Satanism and cooking babies are essentially keeping one of the most important novels in American literature in print. It's a strange and telling insight into the modern publishing world.

Manic D and Feral House cover two ends of the independent book

spectrum. Manic D utilizes intelligence, humor, and determination, and they come across as a literary equivalent to Superchunk; Feral House outwardly instigates and offends, but has an inward sense of intelligence, and they come across as a literary equivalent to the Dwarves. And just like you can find one underground community with Superchunk and the Dwarves peacefully

coexisting with each other and amongst a diverse mixture of other bands, you can look in that same underground community and find Manic D, Feral House, and a world of books in between.

HEY, MAN, I'VE GOT THIS ZINE

The next logical group of people to enter the world of independent books were the people who put out zines. These folks were already writing and already had a back catalog of work. They had developed their audience, they'd learned how to publish their work themselves, and they'd learned how to get their stuff in stores. It just made sense for a few of the more serious zinesters to take the next step and make books.

Beyond all of this, though, zine writers had one more advantage over other writers. Coming out of a Do-It-Yourself community and carrying certain DIY ethics with them, zine writers understood a few things about corporate publishing. They understood that big media corporations were made up of people who didn't necessarily have any passion for books and who didn't even necessarily like their jobs. These big media corporations and the people who worked for them didn't have any magical stamp of legitimacy. In fact, big corporate book publishers have gone the same way of the big corporate music industry. The lowest common denominator rules. Just as an amazing band like Fugazi couldn't exist in a corporate music industry, but a joke band like Limp Bizkit can thrive there, an amazing writer like Howard Zinn will always be passed over by a corporate book company to make room for the latest biography by The Rock⁹. Despite this fact, most writers view self-publishing as a failure, and they see small presses as secondary to big New York publishing houses.

Zine writers, on the other hand, know better. They come from a community where you can publish something yourself and people know that it's probably a choice based on ethics — you don't want Rupert Murdoch to make money off your book, or you want to have complete control over your work, or you don't want to be swallowed up by a faceless corporation that won't market or promote you, anyway — and not something you did because you couldn't get a big publisher to publish your work. So the zine scene took the next step.

One of the earliest publishers to transform a zine into a book was a guy who goes by the name of Harvey Wallbanger. Wallbanger worked for over thirty years as a journalist in Chicago, where he "spent most of his time at Ricardos, an Italian restaurant and bar halfway between the *Chicago Sun-Times* and Tribune Tower."¹⁰ After Ricardos closed, Wallbanger migrated down to New Orleans and formed Garrett County Press. His initial inspiration behind Garrett County Press was a small zine called *Temp Slave!* *Temp Slave!* was the brain child of Jeff Kelly, who wrote the first issue of the zine during his last two weeks of a temporary assignment at an insurance company. Initially, he did the zine to vent his frustrations as a temp worker, but the zine caught on. He continued to write issues. Other people contributed their own stories about temping. The circulation grew from twenty-five readers to over three thousand. One of those readers was Harvey Wallbanger. Wallbanger believed that the zine was "great literature," so he started Garrett County Press specifically to publish a collection of the best material from *Temp*

Slave! In 1997, the *Best of Temp Slave!* was released.

Wallbanger approached the release of *Best of Temp Slave!* differently than your typical zinester. For one thing, he solicited sociologist, writer, and radio personality Studs Terkel to write a blurb for the book. Luckily, Terkel liked *Best of Temp Slave!* and wrote a few very positive sentences of endorsements for the back of the book. This gave the book immediate mainstream legitimacy, because it's much harder for a book reviewer to dismiss something that a heavyweight like Studs Terkel endorses than it is for a book reviewer to dismiss a zine released in book form by an unknown publisher. Also, Wallbanger by-passed distribution altogether. Instead, he would, in his own words, "Sit on my ass and call bookstores all day." This unorthodox approach worked for him. Mainstream reviewers loved the book, and bookstores started carrying it.

With a little success under his belt, Wallbanger caught the publishing bug. He found C. S. Walton, an English journalist who had written two books about the time she'd spent in Russia just before the Soviet Union collapsed (*Little Tenement on the Volga* and *Ivan Petrov, Russia through a Shot Glass*), and he released her books. He also released *The Garrett County Press Guide to New Orleans*. And still, he sits on his ass all day, calling bookstores (though he now deals with distributors, too). And it's still working for him.

Around the same time that Wallbanger released *Best of Temp Slave!*, the former managing editor of the Canadian magazine *Adbusters*, Jim Munroe, sold his first novel to Harper Collins. Coming from both the DIY community and the strongly anti-corporate atmosphere of *Adbusters*, Munroe was somewhat hesitant about allowing a big media conglomerate to publish his book. He had a good relationship with his editor, though, and decided to stick it out. When the book was released in 1999, Munroe learned a hard lesson about big media corporations. "The whole system is set up to access only a certain public in a certain way," Munroe told me. "If your writing or books fall outside of that, then the publicist is not going to know how to help you." Munroe's first novel, *Flyboy Action Figure Comes with Gas Mask*, is a science fiction novel with strong, left-leaning political themes. It fell outside of what the mainstream publicist knew how to publicize, and *Flyboy* suffered accordingly. Looking back on the whole situation, Munroe told me, "What surprised me about Harper Collins is that I expected them to really market the shit out of the book in an expensive way and in a way that I would really have problems with. But they didn't. They didn't do anything." Rather than letting his book die, Munroe took the marketing of it into his own hands, coming up with several schemes. Harper Collins helped Munroe out with some of his ideas, and they stifled others. In the end, though, Munroe realized that he had all the tools that he needed at his disposal. If he was doing all the work, anyway, he figured he should publish his second book himself, so he formed No Media Kings.

No Media Kings released Munroe's second novel, *Angry Young Spaceman*. Munroe immediately went to work trying to sell the book. He drafted a press release that explained why he left Harper Collins and self-published his second book. The Canadian press picked up on this story, and before *Angry Young Spaceman* was released, Munroe had done thirteen interviews with magazines, weeklies, and newspapers. Once the book was released, he went on a tour of Canada. Rather than simply reading parts of his book while on tour, he hired an artist to create alien art-

INDEPENDENT BOOK COMPANIES THAT DIDN'T MAKE IT INTO THE ARTICLE BUT ARE STILL WORTH MENTIONING:

GORSKY PRESS: IT'S THE BOOK PUBLISHING ARM OF RAZORCAKE. I DIDN'T MENTION IT BECAUSE I'M PRIMARILY A FAN OF BOOKS AND SECONDARILY A PUBLISHER OF THEM. BUT WE'RE STILL A PRETTY COOL COMPANY. CHECK US OUT AT WWW.GORSKYPRESS.COM

SOFT SKULL PRESS: FOUNDED BY PUNKER SANDER HICKS, SOFT SKULL RE-ISSUED THE GEORGE W. BUSH BIOGRAPHY *FORTUNATE SON* AFTER MAINSTREAM PUBLISHER ST. MARTIN'S PRESS CAVED IN TO PRESSURE FROM THE BUSH FAMILY. THEY ALSO RELEASED THE RECENT *DANCE OF DAYS*, A BOOK ABOUT DC PUNK, AND A BUNCH OF OTHER BOOKS. FOR MORE INFO, SEE WWW.SOFTSKULL.COM

FOUR WALLS EIGHT WINDOWS: A LITTLE BIGGER AND A LITTLE MORE LITERARY THAN MOST OF WHAT I COVERED IN THIS ARTICLE, BUT IT'S STILL A PRETTY COOL INDIE. FOR MORE INFO, SEE WWW.FOURWALLEIGHTWINDOWS.COM

SEVEN STORIES PRESS: A LONG RUNNING INDEPENDENT PRESS. THEY RELEASED THE ZINN READER AND HAVE ALSO RE-RELEASED A BUNCH OF NELSON ALGREN'S BOOKS. TO GIVE ALGREN HIS DUE, CHECK OUT WWW.SEVEN-STORIES.COM

COMMON COURAGE PRESS: A REALLY COOL POLITICAL PRESS AND INDEPENDENT BOOK DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OUT OF MAINE. FOR MORE INFO, SEE WWW.COMMONCOURAGEPRESS.COM

SOUTH END PRESS: ANOTHER REALLY COOL, LONG RUNNING INDEPENDENT PRESS. SOUTH END FOCUSES PRIMARILY ON POLITICAL NON-FICTION. THE LEGENDARY Z MAGAZINE IS AN OFFSHOOT OF SOUTH END PRESS. FOR MORE INFO, SEE WWW.SOUTHENDPRESS.ORG

STEEL CAGE BOOKS: AN INDEPENDENT RECORD LABEL AND THE FOLKS WHO BRING YOU CARBON 14 FANZINE, STEEL CAGE ALSO RECENTLY PUBLISHED THE BOOK *JOBJUMPER* BY PHIL IRWIN (A.K.A. THE WHISKEY REBEL). FOR MORE INFO, SEE WWW.STEELCAGERECORDS.COM

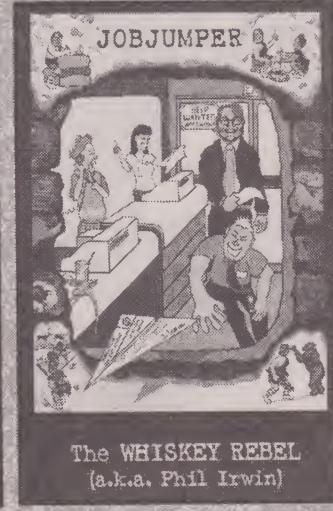
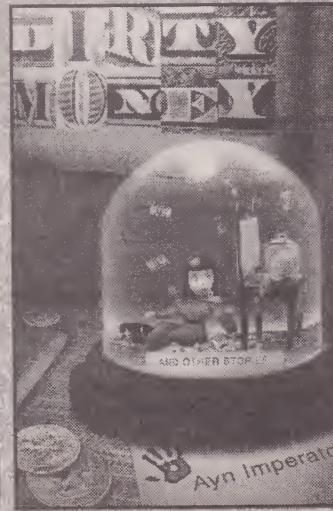
AKASHIC BOOKS: THIS IS THE BOOK COMPANY FORMED BY GIRLS AGAINST BOYS BASSIST JOHNNY TEMPLE AND HIS PARTNER, MARK SULLIVAN. THEY RECENTLY RELEASED *WE OWE YOU NOTHING: PUNK PLANET*, THE COLLECTED INTERVIEWS. FOR MORE INFO, SEE WWW.AKASHICBOOKS.COM

AK PRESS: A "WORKER'S OWNED COLLECTIVE," AK PRESS SEEMS TO BE RELEASING MOSTLY SPOKEN WORD CDS LATELY, BUT THEY DO PUBLISH A LOT OF POLITICAL NON-FICTION. THEY ALSO DISTRIBUTE BOOKS, AND YOU'LL OFTEN FIND AK PRESS TABLES SET UP AT PUNK ROCK SHOWS. FOR MORE INFO, SEE WWW.AKPRESS.ORG

THOSE LEFT OUT: I'M SURE THERE ARE COMPANIES I'VE LEFT OUT. I'LL LEAVE IT UP TO YOU TO FIND THEM.

facts, and Munroe went from town to town, giving a presentation on teaching English on other planets (which the main character of *Angry Young Spaceman* does). The tour went well. Between the tour and the press coverage, Munroe managed to sell more copies of *Angry Young Spaceman* than Harper Collins was able to sell of *Flyboy*. Munroe even made enough money off of his book to quit his job and make a living as a novel writer and self-publisher.

Munroe publishes only his own work through No Media Kings



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(he'll release his next novel, *Everything in Silico*, in April of 2002), but he has set up the company to do more than just that. His web site (www.nomediakings.com) is a great resource for anyone who's interested in publishing their own work or for anyone who is interested in learning more about the world of independent publishing. It gives step by step instructions for writing, printing, designing the cover, and marketing and distributing the book. He also has a "Threat by Example" page which features interviews with other writers whose zines have gotten out of hand and become books.

Several other people have come from the zine scene and published books. Andy, the bassist from the band Submission Hold and the writer behind the zine *I'm Johnny and I Don't Give a Fuck*, turned the fourth issue of his zine into a fantastic novel and published it as a book. He bypassed the publishing world almost completely, though, by selling the book only through mail order and at Submission Hold shows. He ended up selling two thousand copies of the book. It's currently out-of-print.

Jeffrey Yamaguchi turned his *Working for the Man* zine into a hilarious book¹¹. Aaron Cometbus wrote a novel and released it in book form as *Cometbus* #47. The Brooklyn hardcore label, The Buddy System, collected the first nine issues of *Burn Collector* by Al Burian and released them as a book. And Adam Voith took a collection of short stories that he'd written and released them in his book *Bridges with Spirit*. Voith did things a bit in reverse, though, by releasing his book first, struggling to sell it, and finally supporting it by establishing an independent magazine called *Little Engines*¹². And the list goes on.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF. THE FUTURE'S UP TO YOU¹³

After I had interviewed seven small publishers and done a bunch of research to write this article, I took a break and turned on the television. I was half paying attention to the tube when I noticed an advertisement with a Madison-Avenue-replica of a slacker in a college classroom. The fake slacker was telling his professor that now, thanks to the Xerox corporation, anyone can publish his own book. I thought this was kind of funny, because everything I've learned about publishing has taught me how wrong that statement is. While it's true that recent technological advancements have made it possible for anyone to *print* his own book, the publishing end is completely different. Publishing requires the ability to design book covers, to typeset a manuscript, to edit intelligently, to establish an audience before the book goes to print, to find a way to get your books into stores, and to find a way to pay for all of this. Jim Munroe explained this the best. He said, "When people who have never published anything ask me about books, I tell them, 'You have to publish something first, and it should be cheap, and it should be stapled. It doesn't have to be a zine. If you want to be literary, it can be a chap book. But you have to go through the process on a smaller level.' There's no way I could've pulled off what I pulled off with *Angry Young Spaceman* without having made tons of mistakes before."

Bad television commercials notwithstanding, recent advances in technology are a positive force in the world of independent publishing. Just as the independent music industry blossomed when CD production became affordable, and just as the zine world blossomed when kids learned how to steal copies from Kinkos, independent book publishing is starting to thrive now that the costs of producing a book have gone down.

ENDNOTES:

1. City Lights Bookstore is still in San Francisco. Lawrence Ferlinghetti still owns it.
2. *Howl* made Ginsberg infamous, also. In 1957, US Customs seized a shipment of *Howl* (the book was printed in England) and brought obscenity charges up against Allen Ginsberg and City Lights. Some of the lines they took issue with: "I've seen the greatest minds of my generation... who bailed in the morning in the evenings in rosegardens and the grass of public parks and cemeteries scattering their semen freely to whomever come who may" and "Adorations! Illuminations! Religions! the whole boatload of sensitive bullshit!"
3. City Lights Publishers and Black Sparrow Press are both still around. City Lights releases a dozen new titles every year and has over a hundred books in print. Black Sparrow Press currently has over two hundred titles in print.
4. News Corporation, Pearson PLC, Time Warner, Bertelsmann, Hearst, Advance Publications, and Viacom are the companies that took over the book industry. They currently own over 90% of it.
5. I don't mean to suggest here that no books released by the big publishing companies today are good. This isn't true. I'm a big fan of a lot of authors (Sherman Alexie, Katherine Dunn, Cormac McCarthy, and Haruki

A FEW HIGHLY RECOMMENDED INDEPENDENT BOOKS:

DEAR MR. MACKIN... BY REV. RICHARD J. MACKIN (GORSKY): A COLLECTION OF LETTERS AND COLUMNS BY A RAZORCAKE COLUMNIST. YES, I PUBLISHED IT, AND THIS IS KIND OF A SHAMELESS PLUG, BUT IT'S A FUCKING HILARIOUS BOOK.

DIRTY MONEY BY AYN IMPERATO (MANIC D): A COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES BY A FORMER MRR COLUMNIST. THE STORIES ARE SO HONEST AND WELL-WRITTEN THAT I BECAME COMPLETELY ENTRENCHED IN HER WORLD.

BURN COLLECTOR BY AL BURIAN (THE BUDDY SYSTEM): A COLLECTION OF THE ZINE BURN COLLECTOR, ISSUES 1 - 9. CONVERSATIONAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL BURIAN EVEN MADE ME BELIEVE, FOR A SECOND ANYWAY, THAT TRAVELLING BY GREYHOUND CAN BE FUN, AND I'VE TRAVELED BY GREYHOUND, AND IT'S REALLY REALLY NOT FUN.

LANO BY AARON COMETBUS (COMETBUS): AARON'S FIRST FULL-FLEDGED NOVEL. A BIT MELANCHOLY, BUT SOME AMAZING WRITING.

THE X-RATED BIBLE BY BEN AKERLEY (FERAL HOUSE): THE STRONGEST PROTECTION WE HAVE AGAINST CENSORSHIP AND THE MORAL MAJORITY.

THE WAR AGAINST OBLIVION BY JOHN ROSS (COMMON COURAGE): AN EXCELLENT AND BALANCED INSIGHT INTO THE ONGOING STRUGGLES IN CHIAPAS, MEXICO. IT'S THE BEST COVERAGE OF THE ZAPATISTA MOVEMENT THAT I'VE READ.

GLUE AND INK REBELLION BY SEAN CARSWELL (GORSKY): I KNOW THIS IS REALLY BLATANT SELF-PROMOTION, BUT IF I DIDN'T LOVE THIS BOOK, I WOULDN'T HAVE GONE THROUGH ALL THE TROUBLE OF WRITING AND PUBLISHING IT. IT'S A COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES AND COLUMNS THAT I'VE WRITTEN FOR VARIOUS ZINES OVER THE YEARS.

KAMIKAZE LUST BY LAUREN SANDERS (AKASHIC): A NOVEL ABOUT A REPORTER IN NEW YORK CITY WHO IS ON STRIKE, SO SHE TAKES SIDE WORK GHOST-WRITING A PORNOGRAPHER'S BIOGRAPHY. SOME PARTS RING A LITTLE HOLLOW, BUT ONCE YOU START READING IT, YOU'LL GET SUCKED IN.

YOU CAN'T BE NEUTRAL ON A MOVING TRAIN BY HOWARD ZINN (BEACON): I COULDN'T RESIST ANOTHER HOWARD ZINN PLUG. WILL YOU STILL BE A REBEL WHEN YOU'RE EIGHTY YEARS OLD? IN THIS MEMOIR, HOWARD ZINN EXPLAINS HOW HE DID IT.

THE BOOKS MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE I'VE READ, ENJOYED, AND RECOMMEND MOST OF THESE. I'LL LET YOU DECIDE FOR YOURSELF WHICH ONES TO CHECK OUT.

And as more good independent books get released, readers start to understand that independence from big media corporations is a choice, not a failure. Writers are releasing self-published books out of a desire to push conventions and challenge the mainstream, not because they can't meet conventions or be a part of the mainstream. And, as an avid reader, this is exciting to me. I'm looking forward to the time when publishers like Manic D and Garrett County have the same kind of underground support that independent record labels like No Idea and BYO have now. I'm looking forward to reading the next generation of underground writers. And I'm looking at the weeds growing up through the cracks in the sidewalk, and I'm feeling optimistic.



- Murakami, just to name a few) who are published by big publishing companies. By and large, though, these companies do suck.
- This isn't the Manic D slogan or anything. It's just something that Jennifer Joseph said when I interviewed her for this article.
- For more information, see my interview with *The X-Rated Bible* author Ben Akerley in issue #4 of *Razorcake*.
- If you want to know how we got the eight hour workday, start by looking into the Haymarket Affair.
- I don't mean to put down The Rock, here, lest he layeth the smackdown upon my ass. I'm just suggesting that he's a better wrestler than he is a writer.
- This is what he told me. I swear.
- For more information about *Working for the Man*, see the book review in issue #6 of *Razorcake*, or go to www.workingfortheman.com. I interviewed Jeffrey Yamaguchi for the piece, but this article was getting too long, so I put the whole interview on www.razorcake.com.
- I also interviewed Adam Voith for this article, but, again, I didn't have room to include much of what he said. For more information, check out www.tnlbooks.com.
- Gratuitous Big Boys reference.



TIGHT BRO'S FROM WAY BACK WHEN

HOW TIGHT IS YOUR FRO, I MEAN BRO?

PHOTOS BY SHAWN MEDINA AND KILL ROCK STARS

Hello there fellow good timers and rock'n'roll worshippers! Behold the power of the one band whose name speaks volumes when it comes to intensity, integrity, and intelligence. Yes, just like Kurt Angle the wrestler, The Tight Bros. From Way Back When ooze the above qualities, and they make rock'n'roll the kids can shake their butt to. No, they don't act like rock stars. They're regular folks

like you and me, but when they get on that stage, it's a whole other story. The power of Christ compels you! The Tight Bros. get down and dirty with a sloppy, tight, MC5, AC/DC, The Up hurled into a spin cycle of rock'n'roll freshness - er, defness??? The frenetic energy of their music moves the crowd and the band along with wild, reckless abandonment. No stone is left

INTERVIEWED BY
THEE DRUNKEST
WOMAN IN SHOW
BUSINESS:
MISS
NAMELLA J. KIM

unturned. Like a rock'n'roll hurricane, these guys will whirl at hundred plus speeds right through your ears and right into your soul! Can I get an amen, brothers and sisters? There is nothing better than an honest band whose modus operandi is to kick some ass! The TBFWBW sprang eternal from Pinhead Gunpowder, Behead The Prophet, Karp, etc. and formed back in the year of our Lord, 1999. Their now-classic debut release on Kill Rock Stars, *Runnin' Through My Bones*, blows everything out of any large concentration of liquid - I mean play this thing loud and you swear you're right in the

middle of the mayhem. Their latest effort, *Lend You a Hand*, takes them another step further into the trenches of rock'n'roll with inspired R&B covers and even more Tight-ness than ever

before I saluted the Tight Bros. by drinking too much during the night and doing this interview pissed out of my mind. Props to The Cherry Valence who opened up with a dual drum, three guitar assault! Look out for these bands when they come to your town. It kind of makes life a little less shittier when someone can get up there and just make everyone wanna MOVE!

QUITTY A.K.A. CRUMBY -
GUITAR • SEAN KELLY -
GUITAR • JARED WARREN - VOCALS, AFR0 •
• NAT DAMM - DRUMS •
• DAVE HARVEY - BASS SOPHISTICATE •

Nam: Why did you guys decide to hook up and play together?

Quitzy: Well, me and Dave, the other guitar player - okay, personally, I was sick and tired of playing hardcore because it was all just so "me." Okay, it took away all my energy, and I just didn't know anybody who liked rock'n'roll. I was in a band with Dave called Behead The Prophet and he said I was just bitching and bitching and I said, "I just want to play in a rock'n'roll band." Dave said, "We should just do it." So, I said, "Okay" and we went through a whole mess of drummers. Let's put it like this: the first Tight Bros. was nothing like you see and hear now. It was just me and Dave and we both played guitar and sang. Jared was the bass player. Believe it or not, he DID NOT sing! Can you believe that?

Nam: No way!

Quitzy: So, it was not that good, but it all fell into place. Shawn moved to town, and we recruited him. He was skeptical but we won him over. Nat is our second drummer - the other guy got kicked out, but we all love each other and we love to play music so...

Nam: Who farts the loudest?

Quitzy: The loudest?...Dave.

Nam: Who farts the stinkiest?

Quitzy: I wanna say Jared, but Jared has recovered, so I want to say Nat. He's got like these milky rot farts.

Nam: You should suggest a macrobiotic diet for everyone while on tour, for courtesy's sake.

Quitzy: He's a vegetarian and he doesn't overdo the dairy.

Nam: But why does it smell so bad?

Quitzy: Why? Did you smell it?

Nam: No, but looking at you telling me how bad it smelled indicates that it's quite rank.

Quitzy: Okay, once and for all, the one who farts the loudest is Dave. The one who farts the stinkiest was Jared but now it's you, Nat.

Nat: I really don't fart that bad.

Quitzy: Yeah, I know. And I can drive a car! [reeking of sarcasm]

Nam: Are you doing a tour diary for this tour? (The last tour has a hilarious day by day account of the grueling tour of The Tight Bros. - complete with extremely pointed and personal com-

plaints against each band member and their lack of hygiene — on the Kill Rock Stars web page: <www.killrockstars.com>)

Quitty: No, not this one.

Nam: Was there just too much internal conflict after the last tour diary, because some of that stuff was just so personally insulting. **Quitty:** No, this is a five and a half week tour — nothing major. It's hard to be in a van with five people...

Nat: Because we're so easygoing, it's not that big of a deal.

Quitty: I'm amazed because we all have such strong personalities, but we're just keeping our shit in check. It's nutty — like the last tour diary; we didn't really mean to make it public. We just kept it for our entertainment, and it was so good and it was so vile that we just had to make it public. If we had done it again, it wouldn't have been as genuine because it would have been solely for the public's consumption. We try to keep a log of backhanded compliments this time, but it really wasn't going so good, so we scrapped it.

Nam: No euphemism log?

Quitty: Hey that's a good idea. You know we have a lot of good euphemisms.

Nam: "You Guys Are Really Loud."

Quitty: Yeah, that's classic. Hey, you're holding that thing towards me for my response (the tape recorder).

Nam: What's the worst compliment you've ever heard?

Quitty: "You're just like the MC5." You know this guy last night kept on saying, "MC Bros., MC Bros.!" and I think it's because Jared has his new huge hair. (Yes, Jared sports the almighty whitey aphro. Angela Davis, eat your heart out. Better yet, kung fu aphro master, Jim Kelly.) His hair really does look like Rob Tyner's hair and it's like, "Yeah, I heard you the first couple of times," and after the first five times, it's funny. But saying you sound like the band from thirty years ago may be his opinion, but it's not a compliment. I don't just sit there and yell at him like I'm really supposed to. I just fucking play.

Nam: So is there a stigma attached to being the only balls-out rocking band on Kill Rock Stars?

Quitty: No, we don't run into that ever. I think we get that just a little bit of your Olympia hipster contingency that come to see us, but not much. Our audience is a little bit of everybody. You're here, everyone's here to have a good time, young people, old people... We're like an anomaly on the label and so is C Average so...

Nam: It's good to be the anomaly.

Quitty: I couldn't agree more. I wouldn't want to be something that fits into a box like, "Hey a Kill Rock Stars band." No,

we're a band with our own identity. It shouldn't matter what label you're on, as long as you're fucking out there.

Nam: I am not neglecting you (to Nat).

Quitty: Oh, he's only the drummer... and "he drives really well." [profusely reeking sarcasm]

Kathy [(from The Pinkz) interjects]: Drummers are the backbone of the band!

Nam: That's very true. I know because Kathy is. [to Nat] Now tell me your name and everything about you Mr. Drummer.

Quitty: I've always held it against the band, like they've got some nerve letting me not drive and they're not good drivers, but you know what, Nat? You made it on my good driver's list. Jared and you are good drivers. Dave and Sean are bad drivers! They have some fuckin' nerve!

Nam: Okay, now tell me everything about you.



Quitty: Don't listen to her.

Nam: Okay, don't listen to me but answer my question.

Nat: My name is Nat Damm and I'm twenty and I'm self-employed.

Nam: You're twenty? Oh my god, you are soooo young. I am so old.

Nat: How old are you? Twenty-five?

Nam: (real shock and amazement here folks) How did you know?

Nat: You're not so old anyways.

Nam: Ahhhh, fuck you. So how did you hook up with the Tight Bros.?

Nat: I used to book shows in Seattle and I knew Quitty from dealing with them and booking and then I saw Dave on the street three times in a row and asked him about the band and he said they were looking for a drummer and I gave them my number and I auditioned.

Nam: You auditioned? What was that like?

Nat: It was like taking a test. It wasn't very fun at all.

Nam: I guess you passed. So have you been getting laid?

Nat: I have a girlfriend at home. I've been waiting five weeks. (What a fucking trooper this guy is! Man, more rock men should be as loyal and trustworthy as this dude. Right fucking on! — from the girlfriends of rock men everywhere)

Nam: And you love her very much!

Nat: I love her dearly.

Nam: Okay, then I guess I'm done with you. Ohhhh! Just kidding! So, what's the craziest thing a fan has done on this tour?

Nat: In Tucson, Arizona we were playing and WASP showed up and they wanted to jam with us!

Nam: No way! Blackie Lawless?

Nat: Yeah them, and we said, "No!" They got really mad!

Nam: You know, that's cool, 'cause they're a bunch of racist fucks.

Nat: Yes, they are. They are cocks.

Nam: That's why I hate them.

Nat: Yeah, and they told us that, because we would not let them play with us, we would never play anywhere larger than a bar.

Nam: Well, that's very PC and awesome of you guys.

Nat: We don't want to taint our reputation.

Nam: What is your reputation?

Nat: Good times and rock'n'roll.

Nam: That's right that's what we need especially at this point. Tell me something else you want to say because I'm spilling beer on your foot. Can you hold this? My fur is coming off. I don't wanna lose the fox. I take it you are the youngest guy in the band. Are they treating you like shit?

Nat: No. They treat Quitty like shit.

Nam: Come on, spill it! It's because Quitty has the worst personal habits right?

Nat: It's true, unfortunately.

Nam: The farting, the burping, the stinking...

Nat: No, that's Dave, but as far as personal habits like covering his own chest in crumbs when he eats anything, that's Quitty. It's comical. I'm beyond disgust. I just laugh. You can't take it too seriously.

Nam: I think he needs a bib.

Nat: We should make him a Quitty bib. His birthday is coming up so I'll make him one. [Nam saunters outside of Spaceland where she corners Dave for the one pivotal question that was on everyone's minds that night. She's very drunk and very tipsy.]

Nam: (whispers) Excuse me, why did you cut your hair?

Dave: Because I just kind of do that once a year when I feel that I am getting too scummy and I think, gosh this hair is all over my face and it's makin' me feel all greasy, I need to feel clean. And also, I'm going bald. I think it's kind of ridiculous to have long hair when you're going bald, so I dyed it kind of a silver gray which is faded now, but I'm trying to go for the old man look with the silver gray thing. When I get home I will dye it again then I really will look like an old man.





There have been a slew of books attempting to capture both the punk and hardcore cultures these last couple of years. I instantly become suspicious of them if they don't mention a specific man and a specific fanzine: Al Quint and *Suburban Voice*. As good or bad as those books are, they are mere toothpicks of musical memories compared the mighty, volumetric speaker-cone of loud, fast, obnoxious music that *Suburban Voice* continues to be. This is very important. When I mention Al Quint, I'm talking about a guy in the present tense who has a firm grasp of the past, and who's been along for the ride for twenty years straight: *Suburban Voice* first came out as *Suburban Punk* in 1982. What excites me most is that it continues to rule. The forty-fifth issue was just released, which includes a balls-out, no-crap hardcore compilation.

There are several elements that make Al Quint fucking stellar. Although he's past forty and he's literally reviewed over 10,000 records, he's as enthusiastic as a fourteen-year-old when he talks about music. But he damn well knows what he's talking about. To back him up is quite possibly the cleanest and most organized record collection I've seen (which I am currently unhealthily coveting). To put icing on the cake, Al himself lives up to his legacy of being fair, humane, down-to-earth, non-dogmatic and easy going. I say we clone a few more Al Quinths. The world – the punk world especially – would be a better place.

Sean and I hooked up with Al in his home in suburban Boston and interviewed him in comfy chairs. Then we went out for pizza.

Interview by Todd and Sean

Sean: What's wrong with mainstream rock journalism?

Al: They're all a bunch of bandwagon jumpers. Somebody picks a trendy band du jour and they all follow along like sheep. I'll give you give two recent examples. One's At the Drive-In. The other is the Strokes. I think ATDI are actually a decent band. I think the Strokes are an okay band, but everybody's drooling over them, talking about this great, groundbreaking, fresh band. These are people that don't go and check out things that much, I get a funny feeling. I think mainstream rock journalists, a lot of them, are lazy. They expect everything to come to them.

Sean: Have you ever encountered mainstream rock journalists? Have you ever been on a panel?

Sean: Keeping in line with corporate music, in 1990 you interviewed Soundgarden's Kim Thayil.

Al: [laughs]

Sean: During the whole interview, he's talking about money. It was a really funny thing: how many units he could sell on a major label; all of these things. Did that bother you when you were doing the interview?

Al: God, I haven't looked at that interview in years. You've done your homework. I like this. Okay, first of all, late '80s / early '90s, *Suburban Voice*, the grunge years. I have no explanation for that.

Sean: I'm not criticizing you for interviewing Soundgarden.

Al: No, it's okay. I liked Soundgarden at the time. I don't even know if I was thinking about

Suburban Voice

Todd: Have you ever been to CMJ?

Al: Yeah. I used to go to those things all the time from '89 to '93. In fact, I was on a panel. I think it was the New Music Seminar, '92. I worked in retail for twelve years and I was asked to be on this panel to discuss the future of metal from a retail perspective. I guess at that point in my life, I was a little more interested in a career in the music biz. I soon realized that I didn't want to do that, but, sure, I've encountered a lot of mainstream rock journalists and I've found a lot of them to be insufferable twits who don't know what the hell they're talking about. Occasionally, you do find people who know their stuff.

Todd: Who?

Al: I don't know if this guy's mainstream or not, but Brett Milano, who writes for *The Boston Phoenix*. I think he knows what he's talking about. On a national level, even though I don't always necessarily agree with him, Dave Marsh (co-founder of *Creem*), I think sometimes knows what he's talking about, but aside from that, I don't have too high an opinion of mainstream rock writers. I'll tell you a little story. I went to South By Southwest one time. This was around '90. I played in the "media" softball tournament. The captain of the team was Chris Mars from *Billboard Magazine*. I said to Chris that most mainstream rock journalism is regurgitated press releases. He kind of scoffed at that. It didn't give me a really strong impression of him. And I know he came up through the LA punk scene, so I want to know what happened.

Todd: Who?

Al: Chris Mars, I guess, was involved in late '70s. He went to shows. He wrote about it. Now he's the editor of *Billboard*, which is pretty much the establishment. The epitome of corporate music.

it. I was really nervous about doing that interview because it was a "big rock act." He actually turned out to be a pretty cool guy. He told me that he'd heard of my zine. I got the impression that they'd come up through the punk scene, and this is what they were doing now. At that time, I guess all the talk about money didn't bother me that much. Maybe I was in a different mindset at that point. I think it took me a little longer to realize how lame the whole corporate rock world is. I interviewed Living Color around that time, too, which is a big embarrassment, but... you know.

Todd: Is there any interview that you wanted to stop half way through because the people were either so lame, offensive, or such pricks?

Al: Twice. Off the top of my head — Die Kreuzen, who I interviewed in '83-'84 — and I never ran the interview because they were giving me one-word answers. Just not into it. Maybe my questions sucked.

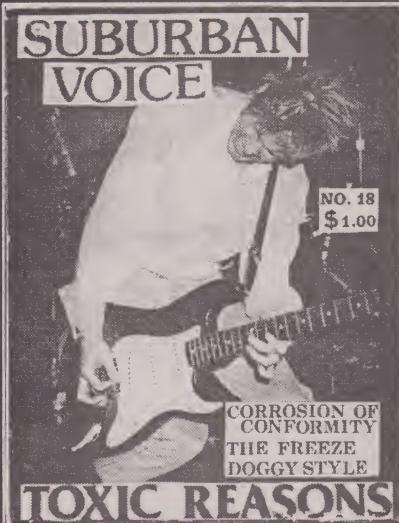
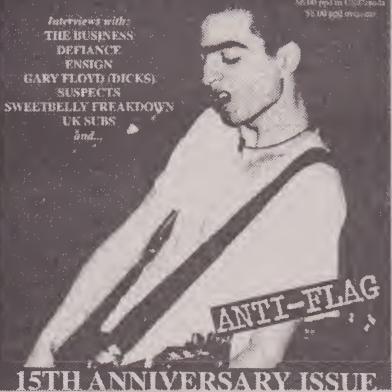
Todd: Is that after their *Cows and Beer 7*?

Al: Yeah. It was after the first album came out. The first time they played Boston. I saw them a few times after, and Danny, the singer, turned out to be a pretty nice guy, but I was just taken aback. The other time was when I was doing a phone interview with Tad Doyle from the band Tad. He sounded like he was half awake or totally out of it, and he didn't respond well to my questions. I did the interview and talked to their publicist and said, "This interview sucks ass and I'm not going to run it." She quickly hooked up another interview with one of the other guys in the band and that went a lot better. It's actually one of the reasons I really don't do phone interviews with bands anymore: because half the time they don't come out well. It lacks the spontaneity. I think it's easier to interview bands when you're dealing with them face-to-face.



Included with this issue: A 3-TRACK CD OF (MOSTLY) OUT OF PRINT RARITIES! UNRELEASED MATERIAL BY YOUTH BRIGADE, JERRY'S KIDS, AVAIL, RAW DEAL, WRECKING CREW, THE SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN, SO, CO., HALLOWEEN, MDG, FUSION, MOVING TARGETS, JUSTICE LEAGUE, D.A., NO FRAUD, ENSIGN, PESTIGATORS, OFFENDERS, TROLL, AKAAT and more...

SUBURBAN VOICE



Todd: That's why we're here, sitting in your house.

Al: That's why I pretty much don't do phoners unless there's no chance in hell that I'll see them any time soon. I interviewed Gary Floyd from The Dicks over the phone a couple of years ago and it was a fantastic interview because he lived on the west coast and I'm not going to see him.

Sean: What do you get, personally, out of interviews? What's your self-interest?

Al: I need to fill out all of those pages somehow. I suppose I follow a standard format of running interviews, record reviews, all that. I know that's not the most original or creative way, but that's how I know how to do a zine. I guess I used to approach interviews as more of an obligation, but the last several years, I've tried to do my homework on them. I want to interview bands that I'm into, that have done something to inspire me, and I want people to find out about. That's the whole idea of doing the whole zine – turn people on to music that I think is really good. People always ask, "Why do you do *Suburban Voice*?" That's still the main reason. And what do I hope to get out of it? I suppose, to make a personal connection to a band that I really like. I want to get to know these people and get to see if there's any commonality. To me, music is a very personal thing. The whole great thing about the punk and hardcore scene is that there aren't as many barriers – to use a bad cliché – it's people just like you playing music. This whole communitarian element to it. Just meeting people on that level.

Sean: So, what do you think the key to a good interview is?

Al: Preparation. Going in, having a good idea ahead of time about which direction you want to go in. Try to get beyond the surface questions: "Gee, how long have you been together? Gee, what are your influences?" Yeah, I'll try to get a history of the band because I'm never going to assume that the people reading the interviews are going to know who the band is. Sometimes I'll have a bigger name, but some people may not be aware. I want to know who you play with, how long you've been together, all that shit. That's important, but have a good list of questions. Another thing is to make it as conversational as possible. Try to create a flow. I write down guidelines for questions, but if I feel like it's going in a different direction, I'll deviate from the script and just try to get it going conversationally and not blather on endlessly, like I'm doing right now.

Todd: So, why have you been accused of being, I quote, an "emo pussy"?

Al: Davey Tiltwheel started that. I have no fucking idea. Pussy, maybe. Emo? I don't even know how Davey came up with that. Did he ever tell you?

Todd: Nah. I think he did just do it to have exactly what's happening right now. Just to get you pissed off.

Al: I didn't get pissed off. Coming from Davey, it was a supreme compliment.

Todd: Are there any bands considered emo right now that you would endorse?

Al: Hot Water Music, although I didn't like their last album (*A Flight and a Crash*) quite as much. I still like them. I'd consider Tiltwheel almost kinda veering into that a tiny bit. [speaking loudly, directly into the

recorder] Yeah, Davey, you guys have emo elements. Admit it.

Just as long as it has energy to it, good, beefy guitar sounds, and vocals that don't sound all whiny, that's all right. But, a lot of the stuff that they're calling emo right now is second-rate Smiths knockoffs, and they don't have The Smiths songwriting skill or a singer as good as Morrissey. Yeah, I like some Smiths stuff. I admit it. That's kind of a lame thing. I will say this: I think that the stuff they call emo right now has ruined indie rock as much as REM wrecked college radio in the '80s.

Sean: You're always quick to defend some of your non-punk music tastes, especially in your *Hit List* column. What's the importance of broadening it out like that?

Al: I think a lot of that is me acting like a grumpy old man, going, "Ah, you kids don't know what the fuck you're talking about." It's just the curmudgeonly side of me coming out, 'cause I grew up listening to that stuff and that's the music that was the cornerstone of my pathetic adolescence spent in my room devouring rock reference books, playing with my baseball cards, and listening to my music. That was a very important part of my formative years. Of course I'm going to defend it. I think it's great music. I've always liked timeless rock'n'roll. The stuff I grew up listening to had that quality. Even today, these so-called garage punk bands or punk'n'roll bands, I hear elements in those bands of the stuff I grew up listening to, so that's why it appeals to me. Somebody's got to fly the flag for that music.

Sean: Let me see if you still stand beside something you wrote about ten years ago.

Al: All right.

Sean: "Joe Satriani is a guitar god."

Al: [deep, exhaling breath] He is, but I don't listen to him any more. I'm not interested. My past keeps coming back to haunt me. I keep telling people, *Suburban Voice*, the grunge years and the Satriani years, they should ignore it. Pretend it never happened.

Sean: But there was a Fugazi interview in that issue, too.

Al: I was working in retail and hearing a lot more stuff and maybe I was more open to that. I don't know. There are times I can't explain. I still have one Joe Satriani record in my collection. I don't think I've put it on in eight or nine years. [emphatically] And that's the truth. He did, however, send out personal Christmas greetings to people who worked in retail. That's definitely a treasured thing in my collection. That's kinda neat, that Joe could take time out of his busy schedule to do that.

Todd: Talking about retail, you ran a record store with a guy who was in Boston – not the city, but the band. How the fuck?

Al: Good god. Totally true. Yep.

Todd: So the question that arises, how do you, a mild-manner hardcore kid, come into contact with the rock god from Boston?

Al: Very simple. We were neighbors when I grew up in Swampscott. Sib Hashian moved into my neighborhood when I was seventeen or so. This was after the first album sold six million copies or whatever (it's now at 16 million). He bought the house two doors up from where I lived. I used to mow his lawn and he used to bitch about what a shitty job I did mowing his lawn. He paid me eight dollars to mow his fucking lawn. Sonofabitch was a

multi-millionaire, and he paid me eight fucking dollars. Even in 1977 dollars, this was not good.

Todd: Was it a big lawn?

Al: No, it wasn't a big lawn, but that's not the point. He could afford more. He grew up working class in Lynn and he was always a cheap sonofabitch. All right, so that's how I got to know him, and he said, "Hey Al, if you ever want me to back you in a business, I'll do it." Flash ahead to about 1994. I had recently bumped into Sib at the post office just before losing my job at the record store I'd worked at for the last eight years. After a few months of unemployment and realizing there was nothing else I wanted to do, I thought of his offer and gave him a call to see if he'd be interested in backing me in a new store. So that's how it happened. He backed me in it financially. Big mistake for a number of reasons. Biggest one

(Marrt was in Tex and the Horseheads, Thelonious Monster, and Funeral.)

Todd: It was a swing band.

Al: Fuck swing. That stuff sucks. I never understood that. I'm a punk zine. Why are you sending me swing stuff? Send it to the *Benny Goodman Times* or something.

Todd: Do you know what Bob Mould has been doing the last couple of years?

Al: I have no idea. Why do you ask?

Todd: He was writing the dramatic sequences for the World Wrestling Federation, but since they've conglomerated the ECW and WCW, I'm not sure if he still has a job there.

Al: I heard he quit there.

Todd: He also does the sound to *The Daily Show*.

Al: I wish Bob would strap on his guitar and start playing again because that's a guy I liked and respected a great deal. Hüsker Dü were

I think that the stuff they call emo right now has ruined indie rock as much as REM wrecked college radio in the '80s.



is that the guy is mentally unstable. There's a lot of other shit, but I don't really want to go into because it was a very painful period of my life. Trust me. Never go into business with washed-up rockstars. And he has his own website. He sells a CD for \$19.95, plus shipping, but it's autographed, so I suppose that's why it's more. He sells autographed photos of himself for \$10, plus \$5 shipping. I'm glad to see this guy is still a penny-pinching sonofabitch as he's always been.

Sean: Let's ask you about other people you've talked shit about over the years. You always seem to want to take a stab at Zander Schloss whenever you can.

Al: I guess I did take a few pokes at him. What shit did I talk about him? Do you have any quotes there?

Sean: I didn't write it down. Pretty much, he was filling in on guitar on a lot of albums in the early '90s and every time he popped up...

Al: I just didn't like his style. I know he played bass in the Circle Jerks. He did okay in there. He played on Joe Strummer's first solo tour and I thought he brought that show down. He played guitar in this one really wretched band with one of the guys from *Repo Man*, who I saw open for the Red Hot Chili Peppers. What were they called? Too Free Stooges. It was around '90. I guess he was a punching bag for me for awhile.

Todd: He joined the Circle Jerks, because when they were filming *Repo Man*, he was stock boy in the movie. They were looking for a bassist and they found him there. He was in some awful projects like the Sweet and Low Orchestra.

Al: That was one of them. Wasn't it Mike Marrt from some hardcore band in that too?

definitely one of my favorite bands in the '80s.

Todd: How many times did you interview those guys?

Al: I only interviewed them once, around the time of *Metal Circus*. I never interviewed them after that.

Todd: But you went to three consecutive shows?

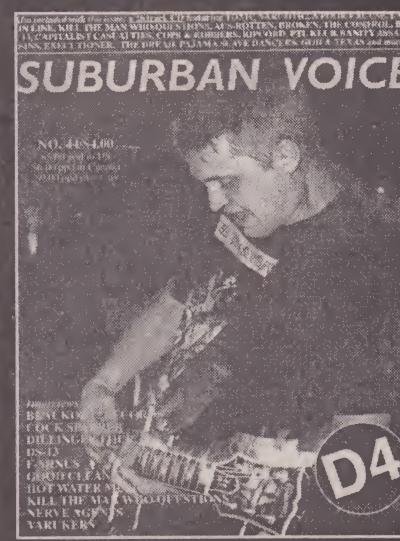
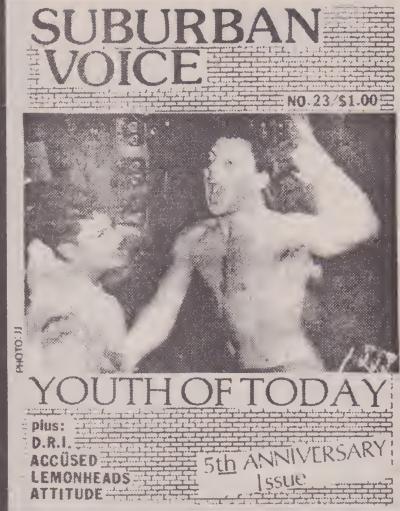
Al: I didn't go on tour with them. I saw them three nights in a row in 1984. My crazy week with Hüsker Dü, including a small party, 150 people at this tiny club, where they played requests and that was great. And I played frisbee with them in western Massachusetts. I was back at work at eight the next morning each day. Needless to say, I was a wreck by the end of the week.

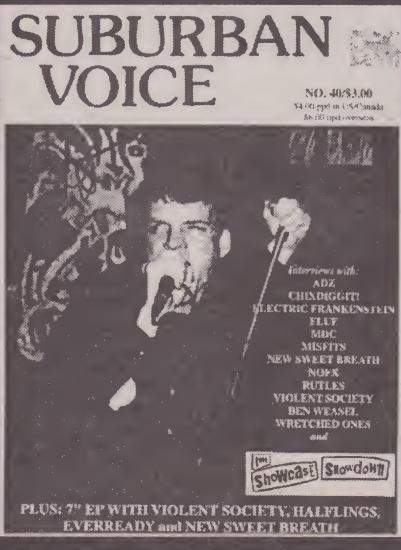
Todd: Did Bob ever make a pass at you?

Al: No... I guess I'm not cute enough. All these homophobic assholes go, "Oh, if some guy made a pass at me, I'd be pissed." You want to know something? If some gay guy thinks I'm cute, great. I'm totally flattered if anybody, male or female, thinks that I'm attractive. It means I've still got it at my old age here.

Sean: Have you seen the book, *American Hardcore*, yet?

Al: Yeah. I think Steve did a pretty good job. There's some factual errors in there, but that's par for the course. But as far as the content, the pictures, the flyers, I think he did as good a job as anyone's done. It probably — I'd have to think about it — but I think it's the most comprehensive treatment of American hardcore I've seen. I don't think hardcore necessarily ended in '86. I disagree vehemently with that assessment. I think it may have sucked for a long time after that, and I think that hardcore





has really made a strong comeback the last few years. But a lot of the old timers are saying, "Ahh, they're just repeating themselves."

Todd: That's just not true across the board. **Al:** It's not true. Some of them are playing like it's 1983 again. You know what? Fine. I don't care. I like that stuff. I'd rather hear them play than chugga chugga metal, that's for damn sure. There's a band from western Mass. called Last In Line. I think they're amazing. They're a total combination of Negative Approach and Negative FX. No, they're not that original, but they're damn good at what they do. They're really tight. Their songs are catchy. Their singer's got an excellent voice. It totally takes me back to why I got into hardcore in the first place. I think a lot of people in my age range – not to act like an old fart, which I am, of course – but, first of all, you don't really see people from when I was first going to shows. They don't go to shows like that anymore. I might see them if some band does a reunion or at a club show. On the rare occasion I'll go to those, I'll see some of the people I knew then, but they don't go check out bands like Tear It Up or any of the new Boston hardcore bands. I realize people get lives. They get older. They move on. Why the hell am I doing this? I don't know. Keeps me out of trouble.

Todd: How did you meet your wife, Ellen? And how has she supported you and *Suburban Voice*?

Al: Tolerating my loud music as best she can. I met Ellen in '79 when I was a freshman in college. I knew her before I started writing, before I started doing the zine. I was into punk then. I was going to some shows. My heavy involvement didn't start until '82 or so, but when I met her, she was totally into folky stuff, like Dan Fogelberg, things like that. I told her I was into punk stuff. She went to some shows with me. I think she liked some of the more melodic things. I got her into stuff like The Clash and The Jam. She doesn't go with me as much because her work schedule is so crazy, but I think she likes the social element of it. She likes some of the political literature she sees at shows, that kind of stuff. But, she definitely hates 99% of the music I listen to, and I don't really like most of the music she's into, either.

Todd: She wrote for *Suburban Voice* for a while, didn't she?

Al: She's done a few things for me here and there. I think I had her do a couple of record reviews for me. She might have written a guest column at one point, but she really hasn't had much involvement with the zine. She always calls herself "the wife," the "plus one." I think her role in my life is essential. I can't imagine life without her. Period. She's my soul mate. She's my biggest supporter. She's always been there for me. That's the most important thing. She respects the effort that goes into it.

Sean: Still, it's impressive. Women don't usually flock to guys who put out zines.

Al: I was also a lot different person when I was nineteen years old. I was a very quiet and shy person, and I think she maybe still sees that. She knew me when I was geeky. I wasn't the loud, obnoxious asshole I am now.

Sean: Here's your standard question from interviews. Do you think music is a viable vehicle for social change?

Al: Comes back to bite me in the ass. You know, when I was twenty-three years old, I

believed that. Boy, I was dumb. I think it can be a stimulus, first of all, for personal change. I think it can inspire people to try to do good, for want of a better term; to try to go out and help people. To try to go out and not be a corporate asshole. I know a lot of people in the punk community get involved with human services. Things like that. I think it just inspires people to do good in the world. Ultimately, if enough people do that, sure, there's a chance to improve things. On the other hand, I'm an incredibly cynical person at times. I try not to be, but there's definitely a part of me that is very cynical. I don't think punk rock is going to cause giant social change. I haven't believed that in quite awhile. I think anybody who does believe that – it's nice – and I admire their idealism. Everyone goes through a time in their lives when they're like that, but it's not going to overthrow the government. I think the best thing is to try to live your own life. Try to change your own life the way you want and try to interact with people in a decent way. That's my take on punk, and that's what I try to do. It's just taught me to just look at things, to try to increase my knowledge, to keep up with world events, to try to dig beneath the surface and find out what's really going on in the world. That's always what I've drawn from it.

Sean: Here's a philosophical question that that begs. How do you unify a movement to work towards a goal when that movement is based on individuality?

Al: Good point. I'm not a communist or a socialist or a libertarian either, because I believe the government has a role. Boy, that's a tough one. You can be an individual but you can also try to be part of a community and realize that while you live your own life, you also, in reality, have to interact with other people, so try to treat them how you'd like them to treat you. And if that's some Judeo-Christian claptrap – there's nothing wrong with that – it's just all the trappings of religion that bother me. There are definitely plenty of assholes. I only give them attitude if they give it to me first. My wife accuses me of being a horrible curmudgeon, but I don't think I am. I think I'm generally a nice guy, and I try to interact with people. If that's hippie or sappy, I don't give a shit because that's just the way I am.

Todd: Switching gears altogether. Name a band that, at the time, was a joke – people hated them and they sucked, then, in the span of fifteen years, they become coveted.

Al: [lots of thought] GG Allin. [laughter] Sorry. I thought the garage punk stuff that he did was pretty good. After that, I don't get it anymore. It might have been said, "Oh, this guy is so outré, this guy's so cutting edge." He was shitting on himself and singing songs about sticking needles up his dick and it wasn't that musically enticing, either. Sorry. In the present tense, I think some people are hook-winked by the greatness of a band like Radiohead. All these kids who were into hardcore are getting into Radiohead. Will someone please explain that to me?

Todd: You're asking the wrong guys.

Al: You know something? A lot of these younger kids now are talking about how great Pink Floyd are. Excuse me? All these hardcore kids getting into Bruce Springsteen? Huh? Oh boy. Granted, the guy puts up the working class front. He has some intelligent lyrics. He has

some intelligent things to say, but I'm sorry. He plays his second-rate bar band rock with good lyrics. Mark from the Hudson Falcons, you're a great guy, but I'll never get the Springsteen thing. Sorry.

Todd: Was there any local Boston band that you saw so many times and you thought their record would be available forever, you didn't get it, and now it's impossible to get?

Al: Well, I just paid way too much on ebay for a 7" from a band called Tracks from the late '70s. I wish I could take a time capsule back and buy some of the records I didn't buy then. There was this one band called the 2X4s, who put out this amazing single called *Bridgeport Lathe*, and I've been looking for that for several years. If anybody has a copy they'd like to unload or burn me an MP3 file of it, I'd be in your debt. I didn't buy as many records in the late '70s, early '80s. I didn't have the money for it, for one thing. I could really kick myself for all the stuff I didn't buy then. Luckily, I did work in record stores, so I was able to build up

band that no one really paid much attention to, but they were cool.

I'll tell you another band that people don't know enough about: The Neighborhoods. They put out a 7" called *Prettiest Girl*, which ended up on that *Mass. Ave.* (Rhino Records) comp, but those guys never released an album when they were around with their original lineup. I think if they'd put out an album in '80 or '81, they would have been huge. They were so great live. Just kind of a good combination of The Jam and straight-ahead punk stuff. Really catchy stuff but with a real energy as well. They did record stuff later on, but it was not as good. There was a band from western Mass. in the early eighties called The Outpatients. They were playing out at the same time as SSD and all those bands. They never caught on in Boston and those guys, at one point, were one of the best bands in the state. Their live thing was phenomenal. But, once again, they never put much out while they were around. The first album, when it came out, was when they were

he mentioned this new station, Allston-Brighton Free Radio, that was starting. I'd heard a little about it. He said the station was taking applications of people who want to do shows there, so why don't you check it out, so I did. I got my show there. I started March of 2000. Been doing it ever since and I've been having the time of my life. This kid I knew did a radio show on a high school station and he asked me to come in and guest DJ with him one time and it worked out and he asked me to co-host it. I did that with him for a year, year-and-a-half until he graduated. The downside to that station was the station advisor was a state cop and you had to beep out four letter words. He wouldn't let them go out over the air. I remember one night, we were a little lazy in doing it, and he showed up at the station in his state trooper uniform, which is akin to a stormtrooper uniform.

Todd: With the pantaloons?

Al: The big boots and shit. It scared the shit out of me. I was like, "Oh shit, we're being busted."

Al: And I used to mow his [Sib Hashian of the the band, Boston] lawn and he used to bitch about what a shitty job I did mowing his lawn. He paid me eight dollars to mow his fucking lawn. Sonofabitch was a multi-millionaire and he paid me eight fucking dollars. Even in 1977 dollars, this was not good.

Todd: Was it a big lawn?

Al: No, it wasn't a big lawn, but that's not the point.



my collection that way. I have most of the Boston stuff I'd want. Some of the late '70s Boston stuff is overrated anyway.

Todd: Who would be the most underrated Boston band from that era?

Al: Hmm. Everyone probably knows the bigger names like Le Peste and Unnatural Axe, Mission of Burma. Most of the bands from back then were not underrated. Proletariat, going into the early eighties there. 21-645. They put out some really cool radio tapes. Kind of like a Mission of Burma. College radio here used to play a lot of demo tapes and stuff. Half of these bands wouldn't put out regular releases or they'd come out posthumously. I think they were underrated. So were Native Tongue and Sorry, two bands that came from a similar arty-punk muse as Mission of Burma and never got a lot of notice outside of Boston. Native Tongue's 1983 album is a lost classic and Sorry put out two overlooked albums. Moving Targets, who could never hold their lineup together long enough to take advantage of their obvious talent, although they stuck around in one form or another into the '90s. General Foodz. They put out a really cool, collectible 7" that's definitely worth the bother. I think it got put on one of the *Killed by Death* comps (#69). An Italian label, Rave Up, just did an anthology. That band got in trouble with General Foods Company, even though they spelled their name differently. They were a straight-ahead punk

more of a metal band and it wasn't as good and all of that early hardcore stuff didn't come out until later on.

Sean: What about No System?

Al: Never heard of them. That was the second band I was in. The first band I was in was called Isolated Youth, which I joined after I'd been playing bass for all of a week. Played one show. No evidence exists, thank goodness. No System, I was in for about two years. Our original singer was Mike Gitter, who was the editor of *XXX Fanzine*. We booted him out after two shows because he was terrible. He later, actually, recorded an album for Wishing Well Records for the band Apology. We weren't very good. We used to do Kiss covers, which went over better than our own original songs. Our guitarist from that band is now a state cop, last I heard. The drummer from No System played in the Vandals for awhile. Doug MacKinnon. The album with "Clowns are neato, clowns are fun" – that song.

Todd: The Vandals Play Really Bad Original Country Tunes?

Al: I don't know. It also had a different version of "Lady Killer" on it, too. He played drums for Speak 714 with Dan O'Mahony. He did some touring with Slapshot, so that's one real musician I've played with.

Sean: How did you get hooked up with your current radio show?

Al: I bumped into this guy at a punk show, and

Here's a raid." Coming back to now, the downside of the station is that it's an AM signal that only reaches two or three miles. We do webcast (www.abfreeradio.org) and I've got listeners from all over. I'll keep doing this show as long as the station stays on the air. They're having some funding problems right now. In the meantime, I'm thinking about getting a show on a bigger station with a better signal, but that's still up in the air right now.

Todd: Has anyone ever seriously tried to bribe you to get the cover of *Suburban Voice*?

Al: Seriously bribed me? No. People always play the, "I'll take out ads if you do interviews with our bands." You know what? Fuck 'em. I always sell out of my advertising. I'm at a point now that I can tell people to pretty much take a hike, 'cause I don't care anymore. Maybe there was a time that I played "the game" or whatever, and sucked up to people, and yeah, I still will try to get what I want. I call it weaseling or sliming. Being a weasel. I think the origin of the word sliming came from Springa of SSD. That's what I call it. I try not to play the game that much. I just don't like it. I'm just going to write about the music I like at this point. If the publicist or the labels don't like it, I don't give a shit. Screw you. Go to some less reputable zine. There's plenty of those out there that will do that. "Gee, this record labels are sending me stuff to review. Oh my god, isn't that wonderful?" They need you more than

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you need them, buddy.

Sean: Haven't you always just pretty much interviewed the bands that you like?

Al: Pretty much. The band on the cover will be one that I like. There were times when maybe publicist twisted my arm and I interviewed a band I sorta liked but maybe, in retrospect, didn't want to do. I did a metal offshoot of *Suburban Voice* for a little bit called *The Bludgeoned Ear*. I did three issues of that and that was all phone interviews, publicists calling me up, "Interview this band. Interview that band." And we did it. Some of those bands I didn't like that much. We eventually reached a point where it's like, if a band's going to be interviewed in my zine, it's going to have to be a band that I'm really into, really want to know more about, has something to say — doesn't have to be political or anything — just a band I think that can give me a coherent, interesting, intelligent interview. That's the thing. If I think a band has nothing interesting to say or are a bunch of dullards — a band I happen to like for solely entertainment value — I'm probably not going to bother. I've tried to regain control of the zine in the last few years and write about what I like, which is punk and hardcore. That's why I started it.

Todd: With issue #11, why did you change it from *Suburban Punk* to *Suburban Voice*?

Al: Because, at that point I was trying to get away from being just strictly labeled a punk zine, even though we know that's what it is. I wanted to write about a wider scope of music. I was also getting more interested in political and social issues at that point and I was starting to include more of that in the zine editorializing from a naïve twenty-four-year-old perspective. But hey, the intentions were good. I thought several years ago of doing an issue of *Suburban Punk* again just for the hell of it. I did bring back the old *Suburban Voice* logo for issue #43 that I used in the mid-'80s, so that was sort of a tip of the hat to that, kind of like reclaiming the old school thing again.

Todd: Did you ever get any flack at the post office with the name *Suburban Punk*?

Al: Nope. The Lynn post office is awesome, by the way. That's why I still have my box there. They know me. They know what I do. They're totally cool to me. They go out of their way. They're phenomenal. They treat me so well there. I know some zines sometimes complain about the post office. The Lynn post office rules. Anyone in the Lynn area, you cannot go wrong dealing with those guys. When I was *Suburban Punk*, I wasn't getting that much mail. I wasn't getting that many promos, so it really wasn't an issue.

Sean: This is a tough question to ask when you keep on calling yourself cynical and a curmudgeon and everything, but when I read your zine, it seems optimistic. Especially in the book *Fucked Up and Photocopied*, you flip through it and it's all these people saying, "Punk's dead, punk's dead." And there's Al Quint saying, "It's still great. There's still all kinds of great music out there." So I wanted to ask you was: where does the optimism come from? What keeps you still stoked on it?

Al: Because it still kicks me in the ass. Simple as that. I still like loud, obnoxious music, as I call it. Maybe it's a mid-life crisis the last few years, that I've gotten back into old school hardcore and like it louder and faster. That's

what still hits me in the gut. Yeah, I still say I'm curmudgeonly and all that stuff. I guess that's because maybe people have told me that. I actually think I'm a nice guy. There are times where I'm cantankerous and I will speak my mind and I'll tell people what I think. If being nice to people is old-fashioned or non-punk, I don't care. That's being punk. If the norm is to be obnoxious and mean and surly to people, I'll be the opposite. Maybe I'm not as negative as I'd like to think. I think I'm more negative in a wider, societal way. I feel definitely out of step. To use a great Minor Threat song, I do feel out of step with mainstream society. Even when I was a kid, before I got into punk, I always felt like I didn't want to be like everyone else. I suppose that's what attracted me to the music in the first place, besides the energy level, was the fact that it was something that talked to me directly. You don't have to be like everyone else. I live in suburbia. I live a pretty conventional life. I'm not a wild partier. I'm pretty much straight edge, even though I don't call myself that. I don't drink. I don't do drugs except for caffeine. I don't feel like everyone else. I don't want to go to work in some sort of corporate environment. You've got to balance the idealism with keeping a roof over your head, living comfortably, and all that, but I never bought into that whole conventional wisdom, so to speak.

I'm really down on American society. This orgy of patriotism we're going through right now just brings out the worst in me. It brings out that contrarian nature in me where I want to hang a flag upside down, which I've done in my house. To be honest, I don't have the balls to do that on my car because I don't really want to get into violent confrontations with people. We're being practical here. "Put up or shut up, Al." Look, I don't fight. I haven't been in a fight in over twenty years. I'm a wimp. I admit it. I'm an emo pussy. I put up a good front, but the truth is out. Al Quint is not a tough guy. My wife, on the other hand, will kick your ass if you come anywhere near me. She just seems like this nice, sweet, quiet person. Yeah. She is. If you cross her, look out. And now she's going to kill me for saying that.

Todd: Has anyone ever come to you to work on a project to document the Boston scene?

Al: No. But I have thought about doing something.

Todd: Has VH-1 or *Rolling Stone* ever tried to pick your brain?

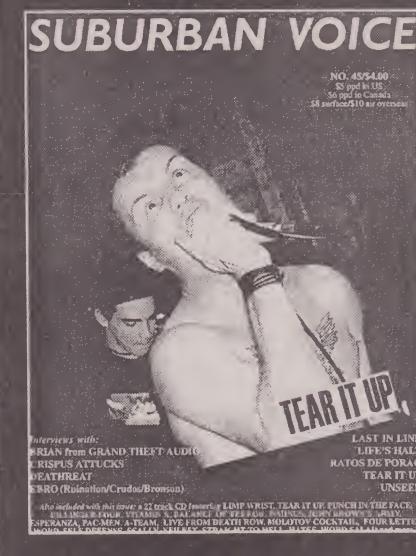
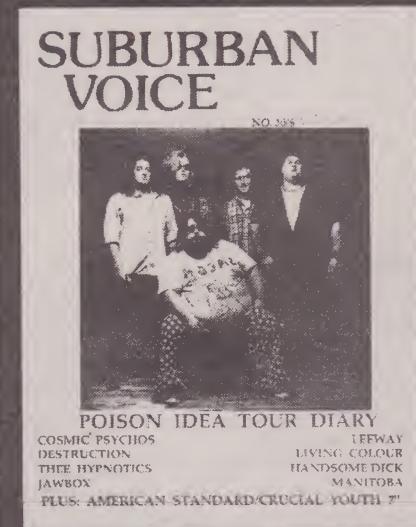
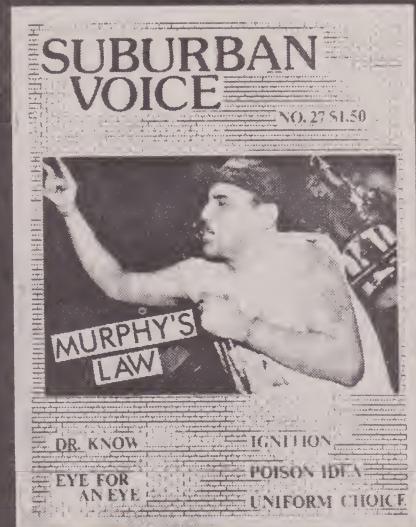
Al: More mainstream people?

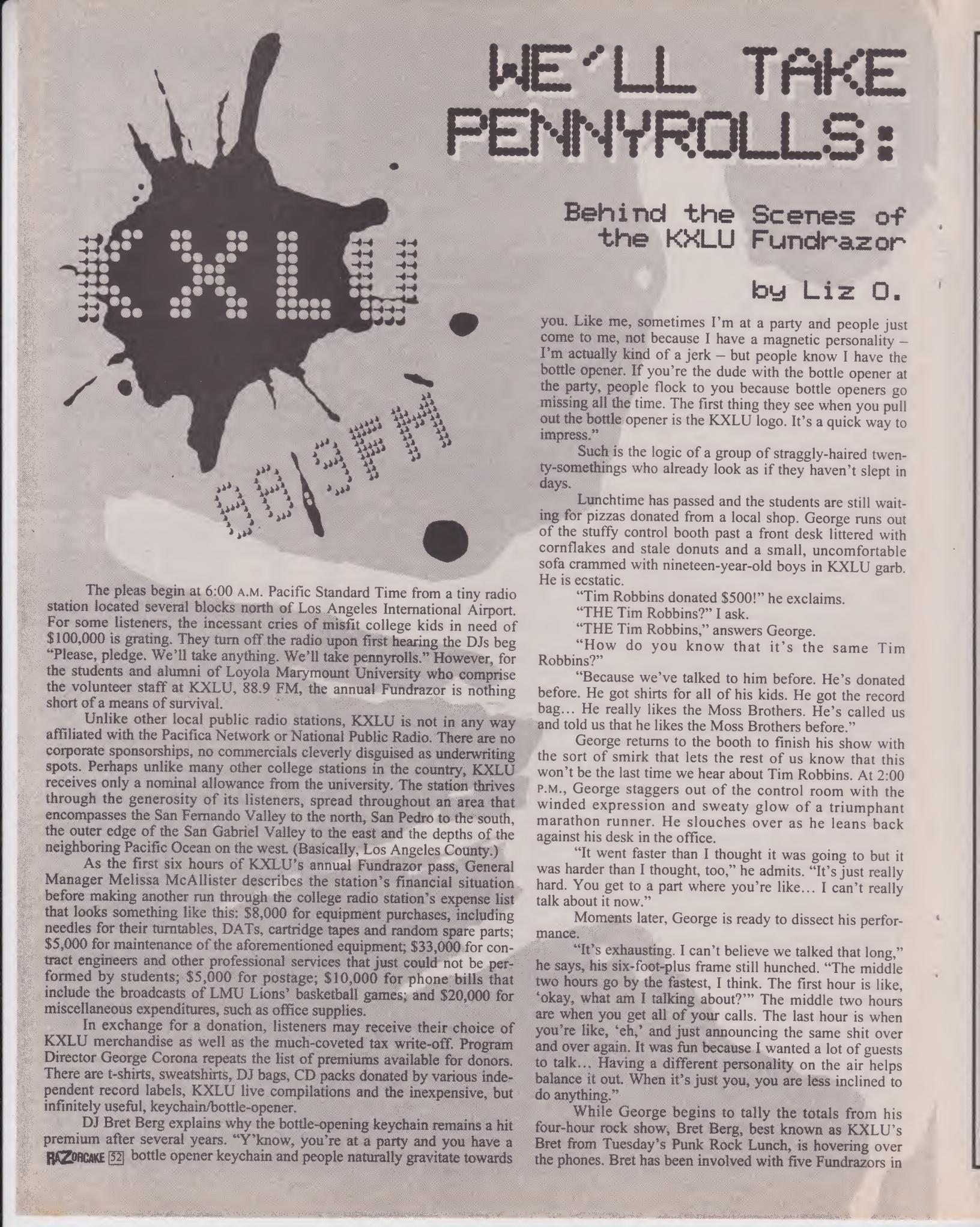
Todd: Yeah.

Al: Not really. I think because of my erratic publishing schedule or my refusal to kiss up as much as I used to. I'm kind of out of the loop. I had some publicist say to me, "A lot of people I talk to in the business have never heard of your zine. You need to get it out there more." And I'm thinking, the kids who like punk know my zine. I'm not writing it for the industry. I'm writing it for the people who like punk and hardcore. I'm writing for my readers, not you fuckers.

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WE'LL TAKE PENNYROLLS:

Behind the Scenes of the KXLU Fundrazer

by Liz O.

you. Like me, sometimes I'm at a party and people just come to me, not because I have a magnetic personality — I'm actually kind of a jerk — but people know I have the bottle opener. If you're the dude with the bottle opener at the party, people flock to you because bottle openers go missing all the time. The first thing they see when you pull out the bottle opener is the KXLU logo. It's a quick way to impress."

Such is the logic of a group of straggly-haired twenty-somethings who already look as if they haven't slept in days.

Lunchtime has passed and the students are still waiting for pizzas donated from a local shop. George runs out of the stuffy control booth past a front desk littered with cornflakes and stale donuts and a small, uncomfortable sofa crammed with nineteen-year-old boys in KXLU garb. He is ecstatic.

"Tim Robbins donated \$500!" he exclaims.

"THE Tim Robbins?" I ask.

"THE Tim Robbins," answers George.

"How do you know that it's the same Tim Robbins?"

"Because we've talked to him before. He's donated before. He got shirts for all of his kids. He got the record bag... He really likes the Moss Brothers. He's called us and told us that he likes the Moss Brothers before."

George returns to the booth to finish his show with the sort of smirk that lets the rest of us know that this won't be the last time we hear about Tim Robbins. At 2:00 P.M., George staggers out of the control room with the winded expression and sweaty glow of a triumphant marathon runner. He slouches over as he leans back against his desk in the office.

"It went faster than I thought it was going to but it was harder than I thought, too," he admits. "It's just really hard. You get to a part where you're like... I can't really talk about it now."

Moments later, George is ready to dissect his performance.

"It's exhausting. I can't believe we talked that long," he says, his six-foot-plus frame still hunched. "The middle two hours go by the fastest, I think. The first hour is like, 'okay, what am I talking about?'" The middle two hours are when you get all of your calls. The last hour is when you're like, 'eh,' and just announcing the same shit over and over again. It was fun because I wanted a lot of guests to talk... Having a different personality on the air helps balance it out. When it's just you, you are less inclined to do anything."

While George begins to tally the totals from his four-hour rock show, Bret Berg, best known as KXLU's Bret from Tuesday's Punk Rock Lunch, is hovering over the phones. Bret has been involved with five Fundrazors in

The pleas begin at 6:00 A.M. Pacific Standard Time from a tiny radio station located several blocks north of Los Angeles International Airport. For some listeners, the incessant cries of misfit college kids in need of \$100,000 is grating. They turn off the radio upon first hearing the DJs beg "Please, pledge. We'll take anything. We'll take pennyrolls." However, for the students and alumni of Loyola Marymount University who comprise the volunteer staff at KXLU, 88.9 FM, the annual Fundrazer is nothing short of a means of survival.

Unlike other local public radio stations, KXLU is not in any way affiliated with the Pacifica Network or National Public Radio. There are no corporate sponsorships, no commercials cleverly disguised as underwriting spots. Perhaps unlike many other college stations in the country, KXLU receives only a nominal allowance from the university. The station thrives through the generosity of its listeners, spread throughout an area that encompasses the San Fernando Valley to the north, San Pedro to the south, the outer edge of the San Gabriel Valley to the east and the depths of the neighboring Pacific Ocean on the west. (Basically, Los Angeles County.)

As the first six hours of KXLU's annual Fundrazer pass, General Manager Melissa McAllister describes the station's financial situation before making another run through the college radio station's expense list that looks something like this: \$8,000 for equipment purchases, including needles for their turntables, DATs, cartridge tapes and random spare parts; \$5,000 for maintenance of the aforementioned equipment; \$33,000 for contract engineers and other professional services that just could not be performed by students; \$5,000 for postage; \$10,000 for phone bills that include the broadcasts of LMU Lions' basketball games; and \$20,000 for miscellaneous expenditures, such as office supplies.

In exchange for a donation, listeners may receive their choice of KXLU merchandise as well as the much-coveted tax write-off. Program Director George Corona repeats the list of premiums available for donors. There are t-shirts, sweatshirts, DJ bags, CD packs donated by various independent record labels, KXLU live compilations and the inexpensive, but infinitely useful, keychain/bottle-opener.

DJ Bret Berg explains why the bottle-opening keychain remains a hit premium after several years. "Y'know, you're at a party and you have a

his twenty-two years on Earth. "The first one was in fall of 1997. [I've been involved] long enough where I know how to fill out a form and answer a phone."

Bret is one of the few who continues to host a piece of KXLU airtime after his stint at LMU ended. After all, it does get incredibly difficult to volunteer a few hours a week after morning traffic and late nights at work become a reality. To hear Bret talk about KXLU, though, it becomes obvious that, for him, hosting a mid-day rock show is more of a calling than a past time.

"I went to LMU kind of by accident," he explains while tugging his second hand t-shirt. "I got hooked up with KXLU the moment I got here, back in the fall of 1997. I was so miserable going to school here that I needed something to focus my attention on. I was very lucky to get hooked up with KXLU because people in the community want to come in and help out, but it's a closed circuit of people. It's not the easiest social circle to crack your way into because we all went to LMU or we knew a lot of people who went to school at LMU, so it's kind of who you know, unfortunately."

As a scrawny college freshman, Bret was immediately hired as the station's secretary. He claims, "That way, I really got to know a lot about station operations coming from an objective point of view. Because I really didn't have to do anything, but I got to watch everyone fuck up. When my second year rolled around, I was in the position where, if anyone needed my opinion on something, I would be able to give it."

While five years may not be long as far as the history of the KXLU DJ is concerned, Bret has been around long enough to figure out why a college station with fuzzy reception throughout much of Los Angeles can raise \$100,000 in pledges. "[It's] because radio really... sucks ass," he states in a voice not dissimilar to the kid who always raised his hand in class. He adjusts his thick glasses before elaborating, "The fact that Clear Channel, that giant media conglomerate, now owns more than half of the radio stations in the country – that situation just begs for independent voices somewhere on the dial. Luckily, KXLU has been around long enough to be able to maintain our position as the independent radio/rock station in Los Angeles. I consider myself very lucky to be caught in the middle of it."

By Friday evening, the LMU campus is a certifiable party zone. Just out of earshot from KXLU's office, the Abercrombie & Fitch set is engaging in TRL-style debauchery at the annual Sunset Concert.

"While a bunch of drunk college kids watch Smashmouth, another bunch of drunk college kids on the other side of campus are trying to raise \$100,000 in seven days," remarks former music director and host of Prole Art Threat, Kyle Smalakis as he sinks into a pile of records in the corner of the office.

Traditionally, Friday night at the KXLU Fundrazor resembles a mini-college reunion. While some alum, like Kyle, continue to DJ during various time slots on KXLU's specialty programming calendar, others have since left the hallowed fourth-floor halls of the Malone Student Center.

As the alumni chat in the lobby while waiting for phones to ring, Uncle Tim begins his ska/garage/soul show, The Bombshelter, with an articulate blast that is rare in the world of college radio.



"SUCH IS THE LOGIC OF A GROUP OF STRAGGLY-HAIRED TWENTY-SOMETHINGS WHO ALREADY LOOK AS IF THEY HAVEN'T SLEPT IN DAYS."

"Welcome to another Fundrazor, another year of the Rolling Stones massacring Barrett Strong's 'Money'."

Tim gets through his hour-long shift without the awkward silence that we grow accustomed to during the week. He speaks fast, clear and constant with a Webster's vocabulary and a knack for solicitation that could make Ron Popeil want to take notes.

"It's all about practice," Tim explains. "I believe that there is a clear correlation. The DJs who do the best during Fundrazor have been there the longest. It's not any mental effort on my part. There's no secret. If you heard a tape of me and Matt (Kelly, who co-hosted the late, great Skankshaft with Tim) during Fundrazor of 1989 or 1990, you would cringe, and I would want to kill myself. I don't want to revisit how bad I was at fundraising way back when. I didn't get really good at it until the mid-1990s."

After having listened to countless Fundrazors over the years, Tim's point seems valid. Time after time it's the veteran DJs – Chris Checkman (Papa John of Blues Hotel), Stella (Stray Pop) and Reverend Dan (Music For Nimrods, which jumped from the KPFK ship and landed on KXLU's doorstep four years ago) – whose banter makes the most sense.

Says Tim, "Chris Checkman's secret is a lot like my secret and a lot like Stella and Reverend Dan's secret and even Jim Dunfred's (Surfwave) for that matter, even though his style is way more mellow and easy going, but when all of us mount our soapbox during Fundrazor, we mean it. We are absolutely sincere in our belief that KXLU is the greatest radio station in Southern California. I'll say this for Chris and me at least, if we do poorly during Fundrazor, we are afraid that we would lose our shows because neither Chris nor myself went to Loyola Marymount. We always felt a little bit at risk so that we have to do really well, better than almost anyone else to keep our slots. If we lost our slots, we would be horribly depressed. I would actually contemplate suicide if I was kicked off of KXLU. It's totally true. I live for my show. So, when I start talking rapidly and trying to get people to give money, I mean it. For me, KXLU wasn't the station where, 'yeah, I DJed there for a couple of years and then I got a job at a major label.' I'm not saying that there is anything wrong with that but, for a lot of kids Fundrazor is just something that they do in college because KXLU is just something they do in college. It's a college station. For a lot of the older DJs, it's one of our main passions, so we speak from the utmost belief of what KXLU is all about. When Chris sounds like he's about thirty seconds away from a nervous breakdown, he is. In years where I've done poorer than expected and sound stupendously depressed on the air, I am. Conversely, when I sound elated, higher than the Space Needle, because I've made more money than I ever expected to, I am that happy. That goes across the board for anyone who has been at the station from, well I wouldn't say ten years because there are plenty of people who have been around the station for five years and are as dedicated as I am. If you

attacks of September 11. I just thought that would put a damper on Fundrazor. I cut my own expectations in half. So when I came in and found that, after twelve hours, we had made \$13,000, I was ecstatic. Demolisten did better than they had done in about three years. They actually improved on their 2000 totals. Mine went down, but I did expect that. I actually thought that they would go down a lot more than they did. In fact, I know because I have a lot of regular listeners who shop at my store who either didn't donate as much as before or at all because they too were affected by this year. I can't expect someone who has been unemployed for half of the year to give money."

Tim moves just outside of the doorway and lights up a Camel before explaining his involvement with KXLU. He joined the college radio family in 1989 "through the benevolence of a good friend from high school named Matt Kelly.

"Matt was a couple of years ahead of me in high school and started Loyola Marymount while I was still at Mira Costa High. At the end of my senior year, Matt got a specialty show called Skankshaft and invited me to be his co-host. Although I never went to Loyola Marymount, I earned a slot simply based on being enthusiastic, knowledgeable about music and able to do a lot of the drudgery that most other people are not willing to do, like always being able to volunteer to do 2:00-6:00 A.M. fill ins, stuff like that."

Having been part of the KXLU family for over a decade, Tim has seen his fair share of Fundrazor-related insanity.

"In 1993, we ended it on a Friday night. In the last six hours of the Fundrazor, things got totally insane. Ben Knight and Alan Rapp had a show called Popsmeat that got \$8,000 in pledges in one single hour. They came on at six o'clock and the phones had an absolute meltdown. It was really fun. I think that was the craziest hour of Fundrazor ever, just having a total avalanche of phone calls. Everyone was on the phone all the time for over an hour.

"Other crazy moments included – I think it may have been that year – no, it was another year. The Muffs were nice enough to play during Fundrazor. The one scary thing is that Kim [Shattuck, the lead singer of the Muffs] started cussing on the microphone very clearly." Tim's voice suddenly changes to a nasally screech. "'C'mon and pledge your fuckin' money to fuckin' KXLU, the fuckin' phone number is... you fuckers.' We were kind of like, 'eek, there is no live edit here.'"

Throughout the past decade, KXLU has fixed the goal for Fundrazor at \$100,000, although it was often unlikely that the station would reach it. In fact, the sign of a good Fundrazor was reaching a total somewhere in the range of \$70,000 through \$90,000. However, all of this has changed in recent years as the staff has proved that is quite possible to surpass this lofty goal. I ask Tim why he thinks that the totals are consistently on the rise.

"Better management. It's totally paid off. In the mid-90s, management kind of lost focus and the fundraising totals were never that good. It's my belief that a good DJ can only holler so much to raise money. Your listeners are going to give you money based on what you have been doing collectively at the station for an entire year. We lost a lot of listeners in the mid-90s because the station lost its focus. A lot of people had shows who didn't really care about music and who certainly didn't sound like they cared about music." Tim cups his hand over his mouth and begins to mumble. "They would go up to the microphone and kind of mumble when they back announced and they didn't really sound like that had any clue as to what was going on." He removes his hand from his mouth and moves towards the cash register before asking, "Why would any of the listeners want to hear a show like that? Why the hell would they want to give us money for a show like

that? Although KXLU is a student organization of Loyola Marymount, it is also a community service for all of Los Angeles."

Before leaving the store, I ask Tim what he predicts for the upcoming week.

"Well, Alma del Barrio will continue to bankroll KXLU. Note to punk rock listeners: if you are wondering why we reserve the weekends for Alma del Barrio, it's because they make more money than anyone else. They pay their way. One hour of Alma makes more money than five nights of classical music."

Translating to "Soul of the Neighborhood," Alma del Barrio is the sound of lazy summer afternoons spent lounging in the shade and inhaling the scent of the barbecue. The KXLU staple broadcasts from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. every Saturday and Sunday and boasts a playlist doused in

"Afro-Cuban and Puerto Rican salsa with a dash of merengue from the Dominican Republic and salsa from Colombia for good measure" and a staff of knowledgeable, bilingual DJs. Since its inception in 1973, Alma del Barrio has earned a rabid following and a reputation as the best Spanish-language radio program in the City of Angels. By Monday afternoon, I'm anxious to see how the weekend staff did.

"Alma didn't quite reach the same total that they did last year, but we're still all right because rock kicked so much ass on Friday," says George.

"Were you up here for Alma?"
"Some of it."

When I mention Tim's comment about the strong Fundrazor totals in spite of the current state of the nation, George elaborates on Alma's performance.

"That's what kind of pissed me off about Alma: they talked about that a lot on the first day. 'This isn't the best time for a Fundrazor, but we're doing it anyway. Blah, blah, blah.' So, I was like telling them the next day don't mention the economy at all. Why remind people? A) How could they not know already? And B) we're trying to raise money. Plus, we did our part. We gave the proceeds from the Spaceland show that we did to one of the relief funds. It's cool, though. They did better the second day."

Meanwhile, Nestor Pereira, a classical music DJ and confidante to the student staff, is looking at the Alma del Barrio totals posted in the entryway. He notes that Alma did pretty well, hovering somewhere around their normal totals. Nestor attributes the show's success to its devoted niche audience.

"I think that the people who listen to them just understand that there is a danger that hours could be cut back. Y'know, that the music just won't be available. Yeah, you can hear Spanish-language radio on other parts of the dial, but you don't get that same sort of mix. There is more variety now across the dial, but Alma still has a pretty good specialized niche that they cover. I think that people really appreciate that. Now that the Hollywood crowd has really gotten into it, [the show] has become more popular."

A thin, olive-complected man known for his straight, dark brown ponytail, Nestor has the look of a college instructor and the soul of a student DJ. Having been involved with KXLU since his days as an undergrad at LMU, Nestor has earned a reputation as the one faculty member who can mediate any dispute between the staff. He has been involved with the Fundrazor since its inception in "1977 or 1978, so, that's about twenty-something years."

Nestor reflects on the history of the Fundrazor. "We weren't really asking for much in the beginning. It was whatever we had. Whatever we got. [Fundrazor] was really short. The broadcast time was really short. We were just asking for enough to get us through the summer, so it was only a few thousand dollars in the beginning... Our budget only covered school time. Also,

THE FACT THAT CLEAR CHANNEL, THAT GIANT MEDIA CONGLOMERATE, NOW OWNS MORE THAN HALF OF THE RADIO STATIONS IN THE COUNTRY - THAT SITUATION JUST BEGS FOR INDEPENDENT VOICES SOMEWHERE ON THE DIAL.



KXLU DJ ANDY SALDANA

too, by that time we were broadcasting over the Christmas holidays, which we weren't doing before that. We had to cover that as well."

Nestor, the first Program Director to incorporate rock at the formerly all-classical station, helped organize the first Fundrazor.

"We had a pretty active moderator at that point who made a lot of those arrangements for us. It wasn't all that difficult for us. Well, it was difficult for us because we didn't have the direct contact with University Relations, or at least the students didn't have that contact. Getting those details set up — like if we get this money, where does it go? How does it get distributed out? The details like, people have to send in their checks and there's a lot of paperwork to be done so that they get their tax benefits and they get acknowledged and they get thanked. Luckily, we don't have to handle that directly. A lot of that is handled through University Relations. We get the checks and we send them over to the Gift Office. The Gift Office processes them, deposits them, sends it to the bank and makes sure we get the money."

While the station is virtually empty this Monday afternoon, one can feel the Fundrazor vibes upon walking inside the office. A bowl of vegan pasta lies in the center of the long table in the entryway — spaghetti pieces strewn across the tabletop between grease-spotted McDonalds bags and Coke droplets. I ask George where everybody is. He points to a room at the very end of the office that hosts live performances and houses KXLU's extensive archive before naming two DJs who have fallen asleep on the makeshift bed set up behind the closed door. In a far corner at the back of the office, Noyze Pollution co-host and computer guy Maki Tamura is fiddling with Filemaker in an attempt to perfect the Fundrazor database. He hasn't left the station in three days. Melissa is still running back and forth between the studio and the computer stations in a tank top and jeans, hoarse from days of on-air pitches and plugs for her own special premium — the Hot Girls Flyer Your Show package.

"I probably don't sound that hot right now because I sound like a man," Melissa explains sounding a bit like a male Marlene Dietrich impersonator. "But it's me, my roommate Michelle, who is also a DJ, and Karen the Love Smurf. We're going to go around for any band that pledges \$100 and flyer all night for them because everyone knows that if a hot girl gives you a flyer, you're totally going to go. Plus, we're also going to go to the show because everyone wants hot girls in the audience."

"Who have been the takers on this so far?"

"A strange British man, somebody who has a film festival who's female. So, strange British men and women love the hot chicks."

Later on, they will receive a pledge from another women who requests that they flyer dressed a la *Purple Rain*.

While the attendance was slim this Monday afternoon, the support from listeners continued as four or five volunteers raced to answer the

screams of ten phones. As piles of thin white pledge forms marked with barely legible addresses and donations grew, the staff realizes that Friday's success was more than a fluke. If calls continue at this frantic rate, the station may actually meet the \$100,000 goal before Friday.

By Wednesday evening, the KXLU kids have gotten their second wind. Inside the office is the anti-cocktail party — an odd mix of rock, classical and specialty DJs dressed in dingy jeans and t-shirts milling around the office with snack foods in their hands and idle conversations on their tongues as the phones lay in a temporary slumber. No one is worried. So far the station has raised more money than is considered typical for a Wednesday evening and early evenings are typically slow to receive Fundrazor calls. One particularly scruffy student is standing by the table, sticking a sign that reads "DO NOT EAT" on a Tupperware pitcher filled with some sort of dark gray liquid. He picks up the pitcher and small chunklets begin to swim around.

"What is that?" I ask, grimacing.

"Clam Chowder. It's been up here since Monday night." There is no hint of disgust in his voice.

"Since Monday? Can't you get sick from that?"

"I'm sure you could die from it," he states before deciding that it might be better to just throw the soup out in the bathroom and try to rinse the container.

In the corner, some DJs are joking around about a case of hygiene deficiency that recently struck the staff. One mentions that he was actually able to smell a DJ walk into class that day. Melissa jumps to the DJ's defense, claiming that his scent is more robust than putrid.

"Definitely full-flavored coffee," she tells the group.

"Melissa, you have your voice back!" I exclaim.

She notes that she still sounds a little manly before explaining the return of her voice. "According to [Chuck Lunch], I needed to gargle with my own urine. So I did it and magically it reappeared."

The small circle of DJs begin to laugh and crack nonsensical jokes like children who have been living on too much sugar and not enough sleep. I move towards the General Manager's desk where volunteer Ben Wolfensohn is explaining the finer points of the DJ-mixed CD to Junior Frances.

"If someone likes a DJ a lot, they like the music. If that DJ goes to the trouble of putting together a compilation, they are really going to respect the comp. Such as, Jose was the DJ who introduced me to more music than anyone, so every year I was always the first one on the phone to make sure that I had one of the compilation CDs. Not only were the compilations good, but it introduced me to all of this music that I heard on the radio. Now I have it on paper, and I can go out and buy it. So it's an inspiration to me. Bret must have sold five hundred of those things because everyone loves the show so much that now they can basically own the show on CD. Mitch (Professor Cantaloupe, host of Glossolalia, a weekly sound collage program) must have eight CDs that he made."

Mixed CDs and their cassette predecessors, while often discouraged by the faculty advisors, have always been a hit premium at the station. However, the popularity of the custom-made CDs has never been as popular as this year, where an estimated 50%+ of the pledges are for discs with names like *Bret's Punk Rock Lunch* and *Dan's Rock You To Death* compilation. George explains the controversy over the mixed CD.

"We were told it was kind of bad. From our understanding, if you don't announce who's on it, if you just say it's a mixed comp, like a mixed tape [then you don't violate any copyrights that the bands on the comp may have]. But Bret's comp was announced by Rev. Dan so many times. Bret was kind of like, none of these bands are going to care. It's not like Dr. Know's lawyer is going to call us. I think it's cool. We'll cross that bridge when we come to it."

Junior Frances, a native of Jamaica and a prominent MC within Los Angeles's reggae scene, is taking notes during his conversation with Ben. He is looking for ways to improve his total pledges next year, likening his mentality to Michael Jordan's quest for perfection on the basketball court. He remarks that his Fundrazor show from last Friday did "okay" with a grand total of about \$1,500 in pledges. Last year, he earned roughly \$1,000.

Ben tells Junior that he has been calling everyone he knows to remind them about Fundrazor, sometimes jotting down pledge forms for Glossolalia. "I'm calling about twenty of my friends to pledge. I called everyone I know. I've already made \$100 for him before the show even started."

By 11:00 P.M., Glossolalia has ended and Chuck Lunch and friends grab the microphones to do this year's pitch for the weekly Darth Vader's Discotheque, a show loosely described by its host as "punkmetalstonerdoomgrindhardcorenoiseradio!"

The booth is cramped with records and CDs. We take our seats behind microphones that smell of dentures packed with week-old food products as Chuck Lunch and George try to woo listeners with a deft comedic sense. They are discussing the KXL button, available for a \$5 pledge.

Chuck describes the pin for the audience. "It's just the KXL bird-poop logo, y'know with the splotch. I believe... is the button black or white?"

"I believe that the button is white with a black splotch," says George.

"So, it's like the bird took lots of Pepto Bismol."

"Or it's the anti-bird," adds former Germs drummer Don Bolles, who has just run into the booth with a pledge sheet.

"Or, it's a bird from a black and white film," concludes George.

Chuck Lunch is ready to move along before the conversation becomes ridiculous. "So you can get the KXL button for practically nothing. Or, you can get the KXL headband and wristband set for all of you straight-edge kids out there. Put them on your head, pick up change, do the Gorilla. What are the other cool straight-edge dances, George?"

"Anything that is from the Kung Fu realm.



KXLU PROGRAM DIRECTOR GEORGE CORONA TALKING TO TIM ROBBINS.

The spinning arm thing."

"They do like Riverdance kind of stuff, right?" Don Bolles questions the hosts. "Except it's a little bit more frenetic."

George answers him. "Lots of arm swinging."

Again, Chuck Lunch is quick to change the subject. He announces the station's phone number, adding, "If you don't like this kind of music, we can always replace this show with this."

"The Sound of Music" blasts over the airwaves for a few seconds before Chuck proceeds to mount his proverbial soapbox.

"The choice is yours, my friend. You think we're kidding, but this Fundrazor is actually our report card. We're showing the powers that be that our shows are actually worthwhile and we deserve to be on the air. Your vote is you calling up and donating money. Oh, there goes the phone. Nice. So, call up at... and show your love to the Darth Vader's Discotheque. Let's take a little musical break, since the phone is ringing."

Chuck's musical break consists of a grindcore song that lasts precisely one second. Upon his return, the host and his guests begin to read lists of premiums from a catalogue-style list provided by management. It's the same list that listeners have heard for the past five days, save for a few sold-out items that have been omitted and packs of Pessimiser records that appear exclusively on this show. Behind the caffeinated voices is a string of songs easily recognizable as Suicidal Tendencies' "Send Me Your Money," the Ojays' "Money," and a host of other tunes relating to the almighty dollar.

"We'll take your Coinstar receipts, for the love of God," Chuck exclaims as he is inundated with pledge sheets. Bret is screaming in the background that they need help with the phones, and Chuck cues Fudgetunnel's cover of Cream's "Sunshine of Your Love" for a listener who pledged \$200. We run into the office to take a few more pledges before the song ends and the microphones are turned on once again. Chuck thanks a slew of donors and tries to define grindcore for one pledgee as the hour closes. The Blues Hotel crew is standing in the doorway, ready to take their posts for a three-hour assault on the non-donors of Los Angeles. Chuck is cross fading snippets of Robert Goulet and Repulsion as he asks the audience "What side are you on? Are you on this side... or this side? The choice is yours, my friend, do you want this or that? Robert Goulet or Repulsion, the choice is yours," before closing the show by naming all of the donors Romper Room-style.

During the final two days of Fundrazor, pandemonium ensues at the radio station as the staff realizes that they may actually hit their goal. By the four o'clock hour on Thursday afternoon, the numbers punched in to the calculator add up to \$100,000.

"We partied on the air" says George. "When it first started, we did really well. The first was fucking amazing... Earlier in the week, it got slower. We totally thought that we would be short of the goal. We

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THE CATHETERS

«STATIC DELUSIONS AND STONE-STILL DAYS»



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just picked it up by the end of the week and we beat last year, which is pretty cool considering that nobody wanted us to be Program Director or General Manager."

George explains the controversy over his and Melissa's appointment to the top KXLU posts. "We haven't been here that long compared to other staff members who had been chosen. I think a lot of people were really freaked out, like they didn't know what Melissa and I were all about yet. They didn't know us. At KXLU, you know everyone there. We didn't really have that relationship with people when we were hired."

Having only been DJs since January of 2001, George and Melissa were newbies to the world of college radio. In most cases, a DJ spends two or three years on the air before moving up to a management position. Where many students are groomed for the General Manager and Program Director positions since freshman or sophomore year, this year's directors were simply thrust into the top spots.

"When we were applying for the jobs, it's not even like we were applying for GM and PD. We just wanted a job. We didn't think that we would get GM or PD at all — maybe promotions or publicity or something like that. When we got these jobs, we knew what it was, but we had so much to learn in comparison to other staff members who were brought up in the whole system. It freaked a lot of people out that we didn't know what we were doing."

"It kind of makes you put a perspective on things. We weren't groomed by that same system that everyone else was. But, the station is doing really well. Everything is running smoothly. Everyone is happy. And this is the best Fundrazor ever. It's good to be underestimated and then succeed more than you ever thought you could. Honestly, Melissa and I have been really organized for this Fundrazor. We have been planning it since June or July. We tried really hard because, with last year's Fundrazor, [KXLU Live] Volume 6 got screwed up, all the premiums were sent out really late. We wanted to make sure that it was done 100% better. Nothing personal against them. That's just what happened."

So how did two clueless college seniors manage to lead the station through such a successful Fundrazor?

"The first thing that we did was talk to people about what the hell Fundrazor was. We had never done a Fundrazor show before... We remember seeing people at Fundrazor while we were doing our Fundrazor show, but we had no idea what to do about premiums or packs or when to do it or how long it was. We didn't know that shit. All we did was keep talking to people — Fred Kiko (host of Demolisten), Chris Checkman, Uncle Tim, Nestor — the people that had been there for a long time. We talked to them and showed them that we wanted to understand. So, we taught ourselves and [listened to] what they told us. We just kind of learned how to do it. I guess walking into it blindly was a blessing in disguise because we didn't know what we were getting into. Maybe that's why we succeeded. I can imagine being like [last year's management team] — having a new staff come in that has never done a Fundrazor before. That's pretty hardcore. Even

if that happens next year, I'd feel kind of weird, like, 'Oh God, these kids have never done a Fundrazor before.'"

Unique to the 2001 Fundrazor is the large amount of support from new listeners. "Seriously, I've taken a lot of calls and a lot of them are new supporters. There are a lot of return people, but also a lot of new people. A lot of people, for some reason or other, have just been finding out about our station, and I think that reflects on our total... Honestly, this year, not to take anything away from anyone else — because the specialty shows did really well — but rock programming kicked the fuckin' shit out of a lot of other stuff this year."

KXLU's rock programming has traditionally struggled through Fundrazor. Where a one-hour specialty show may normally receive between \$800 and \$1,200 in pledges, four-hour daytime rock shifts tend to average about \$1,000 to \$2,000. Even the prime 2-6 P.M. shift rarely earns more than \$3000-4000. This year, however, morning shows (6-10 A.M.) are reaching \$5,000 while afternoon shifts are busting through the \$7,000 mark.

"Rock programming tore shit up this year, which is weird because it's usually the well-known specialty shows and Alma [that carry Fundrazor]. It wasn't like that at all this year. I don't know what the implications of that are, but obviously for rock programming it is a big deal."

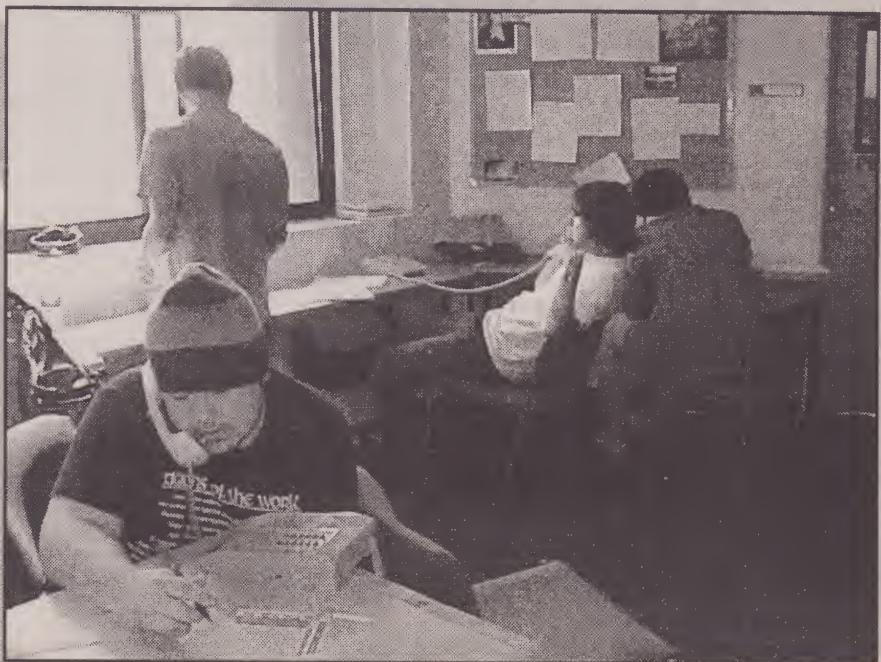
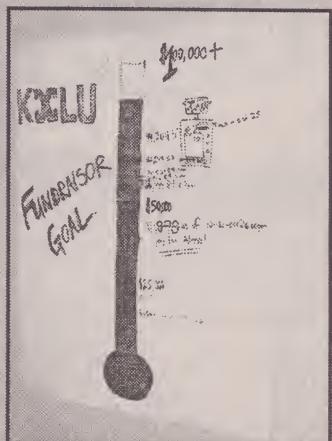
Given this astounding success, this minuscule radio station, with a mere 3000-watt broadcast range, has earned enough money to begin live streaming over the internet, thus ending a Fundrazor era.

"Next year, after streaming, people from Japan and Kansas and New York can donate. It will be so much more. People from all over the world can donate to the Fundrazor, which is insane. This is the last Fundrazor as we know it. Next year, with streaming Fundrazor and international pledges, it's going to be a lot different. Like, we're probably going to have to have an online form for certain premiums. I'm looking forward to that. More people hearing our station is exciting."

Back on the fourth floor, Melissa is starting to finalize the Fundrazor tallies. With only a few hours left, the station has earned \$116,000, better than any prior Fundrazor. Melissa writes the total on a piece of white cardboard hanging on the wall of the entryway. She turns around to talk about her mixed feelings towards this year's Fundrazor.

"What if LA is just playing a cruel joke on us and we only get \$20,000 back. I think that might happen."

**KXLU FUNDRAZOR POSTER (RIGHT).
(BELOW) VOLUNTEERS MANNING THE PHONES**



ALTHOUGH WE LIVE ABOUT THIRTY MILES AWAY FROM ONE ANOTHER ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF LOS ANGELES, AS THE CROW FLIES, I FIRST SAW AND HUNG OUT WITH TOYS THAT KILL AT A SHOW IN EERIE, PENNSYLVANIA IN SUMMER, 2001. ATTENDANCE WAS SPARSE, WHICH GAVE ME TIME FOR REFLECTION. WAS I VAGUELY INTERESTED IN THEM BEFORE THEY PLUGGED IN BECAUSE OF THE FYP PEDIGREE? DID I SECRETLY WISH TO JOIN THE MANY THAT HAVE SEEN TODD CONGELLIERE PISS HIS PANTS? DID I HAVE ULTERIOR MOTIVES? PERHAPS. TOURS CONVERGED AND I GOT TO SEE THEM ABOUT TEN TIMES IN ROW.

THEY ROCKED, AND I DARE SAY MORE SO THAN THEIR PREVIOUS BAND. THEY'RE LOUD AND FAST, TO BE SURE, WHILE REMAINING TIGHT AND CRUNCHING AND PRODUCING MUSIC AS SPARKLEY AS THE HOOD OF A FLIPPED-OVER VAN ON ASPHALT (MORE ON VAN ACCIDENTS IN THE INTERVIEW). THINK BOMBASTIC AND PLAYFUL WITHOUT GETTING TOO ARTY. WHAT STRIKES ME, AFTER LISTENING TO THEIR DEBUT ALBUM, *THE CITIZEN ABORTION*, FOR OVER THE HUNDREDTH TIME, IS HOW WELL THEY MAKE SONGS. I KNOW, I KNOW, SONGCRAFT IS USUALLY A DISPERSSION HEAPED ON BANDS LIKE FOREIGNER, AND SHOULDN'T BE USED WHEN YOU LIKE A PUNK BAND, BUT I SAY IT'S TRUE. THERE'S SOMETHING MORE THAN YOUR BASIC 1-2-3-4-GO! ATTACK THAT KEEPS ME COMING BACK.

IF THE PAIN OF GETTING CRACKED IN THE NUTSACK COULD BE TURNED INTO A GOOD, GOOD SOUND, IT'D BE TOYS THAT KILL. THEY'RE INSTANTLY LIKEABLE WITHOUT BEING GENRE-LOCKED BALL LICKERS AND CHART SLAVES.

TODD CONGELLIERE - GUITAR, VOCALS * SEAN COLE - GUITAR, VOCALS *
CASEY - BASS, BACKUP VOCALS * THEY HAVE A DRUMMER WHO WASN'T ABLE TO MAKE THE POW WOW.

TOYS THAT KILL

INTERVIEW BY RETODD AND MATT AVERAGE

Retodd: So, a little background for clarification's sake. You were in a band called FYP, which stood for...

Todd C: Five Year Plan.

Retodd: And you were together for...

Todd C: Ten years.

Sean: I see where this is going. It said "squared" really little.

Retodd: So, the five year plan didn't work out?

Todd C: We wanted overtime, for the kids.

Sean: You can't take us, or the things we say or do, too literally.

Todd C: That's a bad, bad maneuver.

Sean: They're sort of shrouded in metaphors and cynicism and jokes.

Retodd: What would be the cynical joke of Five Year Plan, then?

Todd C: That it existed.

Retodd: So, the last FYP album was called *Toys That Kill*.

Todd C: Yeah.

Retodd: And then, you broke up and the next day, you played as...

Sean: It wasn't that condensed.

Todd C: It was sort of planned.

Retodd: Then, why? Why change your name when people know it?

Todd C: That was one of the things. To get rid of all the FYP sensibilities. That was one of the things that was bumming me out. I hate it when people ask us to play "Bring It On." It's the stupidest thing I've ever heard in my life.

Sean: Kind of like cleaning the slate. I think the thing is a lot of bands will sacrifice having a good time and sacrifice loving what they're doing just so they can keep the name and they will play songs that they hate just because their whole motive is making money or sustain-

ing popularity, where we just couldn't deal with that. We didn't want to go that route. We wanted to start a new, fresh concept that we'd be proud of and enjoy doing.

Todd C: It's funner to start over, too. The first Toys That Kill tour was the best thing in the world compared to the last FYP tour. Sean and I like the music better. We had

Chachi in there.

Retodd: Thematically, then, what's changed over the years? Did you get too mature for toilet tard (i.e. "tardecore") music? Did you just learn how to play your instruments?

Todd C: Neither.

Sean: Not to toot my own horn here...

Retodd: Toot it. Be honest.

Sean: I think that after the first 7's and the early line-up, a big problem was there was always a constant revolving door of members and it didn't really matter how musically talented you were. You just kind of went for it and there was a charm to it, but I think once Todd and I were a more steady lineup, if you listen to FYP's last record, it's not virtuoso music, but it's pretty musically proficient. It's simple music, but it's tight and not all over the place like the early stuff and I think even with *My Man Grumpy*, the same thing — a pretty well put together record. *Toilet Kids Bread* was kind of pivotal and shaky in that department, but a lot of people, when they think of FYP, they think of some early stuff.

Todd C: Yeah. *Dance My Dunce* and before. It's just like a joke that you keep on saying. It's an all right joke. You keep telling it. The more you say it, everyone's



PHOTOS BY RETODD

RAZORCAKE 60

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ART FUENTES

TOYS THAT KILL

like, "Shut up" and rolling their eyes, but there's new people coming in and they want you to play songs that you were playing eight years ago and it just got to a point where, "Ummm, that's not funny anymore." To us. If it was still funny to us, we'd still be doing FYP.

Retodd: What's the law of three for you guys? Why is every album three words?

Sean: I think it's just fun.

Todd C: I think it's just coincidence.

Retodd: Coincidence?

Todd C: Until *My Man Grumpy* was when we actually figured it out. It definitely wasn't planned.

Retodd: Is it planned now?

Todd C: No. *Toys That Kill*, *The Citizen Abortion*, I had no idea. I mean, I knew

was all planned. (*The last Descendents* album was called *All*. Milo split to get more of that edumacation, and the rest of the band continued as the band, *All*. - *Retodd*)

Sean: I think, too, using the *Toys That Kill* title and then into the band name, it's kind of reflective of bands that do that. We're continuing on a cycle. Some of the *Toys That Kill* songs were going to be new FYP songs. And Todd and I are two-thirds of FYP and, in a sense, we wanted to have a clean slate but it's not like we're playing prog metal all of a sudden. We wanted there to be some relation.

Retodd: So, how did these two guys find you, **Casey**?

Casey: I don't know. They moved to San

years ago.

Todd C: He has the aura of Chachi. He used to wear the sleeveless shirts.

Sean: He's an amalgamation of Ralph Macchio and Scott Baio. Originally, it was Chachi-o.

Retodd: How do you feel about that?

Casey: I don't care. Whatever. I used to be Chachi-o Viagra.

Todd C: Now it's Chachi Ferrari.

Retodd: Casey, have you ever misinterpreted and lyrics to a *Toys That Kill* song?

Casey: Actually, the first tour, I sang the backups wrong every night. In "Amphetamine Street," I would sing "when the scream..." I got it wrong.

Sean: "When the scream MU330."

Todd C: Todd had the lyrics printed up so I



CASEY: I REMEMBER GOING TO SEE FYP A FEW TIMES AND JED GETTING CHASED BY A BUNCH OF SKINHEADS. **TODD C:** BECAUSE HE WOULD ALWAYS TRY TO MAKE OUT WITH THEIR GIRLFRIENDS. EVEN THE ONES WITH THE CHELSEAS.

those were three words. I didn't think about it.

Sean: Autism.

Todd C: Yeah. I didn't even think about that until the record was out. Then I was like, "Oh, man." Me, personally, I don't want to continue with things, even though we did the Descendents thing where we called our last record the new band that we were going to be and that

Pedro and they couldn't get rid of me, pretty much.

Retodd: When was the first time they started calling you Chachi?

Casey: That must have been Hal. A couple years ago.

Sean: A real trend setter, that guy.

Retodd: Do you really look like Scott Baio?

Casey: I don't think so. Maybe a couple

could practice, and I was, like, "What?" "Where the scream mutes the sound"?

Retodd: Everyone has to answer this question. What does your dad do?

Sean: My real dad? [laughter] He works at a mental hospital driving medical supplies. My latest step dad is a sales representative for an optical lens company and the stepdad that raised me works at an oil refinery.

Casey: My dad's a longshoreman down on the docks and he's been doing

that for almost twenty years now.

Todd C: My dad's a teacher, but he really wants to be a football coach because he used to be a football coach.

Retodd: What does he teach?

Todd C: English, P.E., any sport.

Sean: And he wears those short coach shorts.

[laughter]

Todd C: I don't want to talk about my dad's balls, all right? I'll talk about anything else except my dad's balls. They're fantastic balls, obviously.

Sean: [in Todd voice] They made me.

Retodd: Todd or Sean, what's the worst mangling of a lyric screamed back at you?

Todd C: I've actually heard on the last FYP album, where it goes, "Where ever the creeps go at night, I'll be there with my fork and knife." Someone emailed me, "Where ever the creeps go at night, I'll be there stabbing you with my fucking knife." That song's badass, holmes." I almost believed it.

Retodd: The song, "Bullet from the Sky." Where'd that come from? Are there a lot of people in San Pedro on the Fourth of July getting really happy and shooting their guns into the air?

Todd C: San Pedro is probably the capital of shooting in the air. In the news before New Years, there were billboards and signs everywhere.

Retodd: Yeah, there was one down the street from me. "Save your love ones. Don't shoot your firearms in celebration," all in Spanish.

Todd C: Last year I actually saw a couple of news reports or little station IDs saying that, but this year, I saw probably fifteen. I think it was the thing to do.

Sean: In San Pedro, I've never had any problems with violence and I like living there, but it's gotten to the point where you're kicking back in your house and these shots ring out, "bap, bap, bap, bap" and I look over to my roommate. "Is that a gun?" He's like, "Yeah." I'm, "Oh." Then you go about your business. If my mom heard four gunshots, she'd be on the phone, calling the police. It's, you know, whatever.

Retodd: For people who couldn't know, how does San Pedro infuse itself into your band? There's very few places in America that people are extremely proud of where they live. I can think, right off the bat, Austin and Boston.

Todd C: There's definitely thick Pedro pride going on. I love the city. I'm glad I live there.

Sean: We're not skinheads about it. We don't have the Pedro patch.

Todd C: There's definitely some Gestapo Pedro guys that will lay you flat if you talk shit about Pedro.

Sean: Really. It's totally true. There's this old story. A friend of mine's band played and there was this one person in question, during this set, they're playing at Sacred Grounds (a local coffee shop) and he's like, "It's great being here in Pedro. I'd rather be in Temecula right now." This guy comes up to him; "Talking shit about Pedro, bro?"

Casey: There are a lot of people like that.

Sean: I don't give a shit. Living in San Pedro, it's a nice little town. There's a lot of mom and pop businesses. Lots of cool scenery. It's not all hyped up with malls and crap like that. It feels like you're living in an old city. The rent's cheap. Can't beat it. That's it.

Todd C: I think the biggest thing is the Rite Aid. That's the Burger Barn coming to town. When I first moved there, I thought the whole pride thing was just stupid. So what? It's a city. Now, I understand it more, what they're talking about.

Casey: I grew up wearing San Pedro sweatshirts as a little kid. I got one this Christmas from my dad. "Thanks, Dad. I'm not going to wear this."

Sean: A lot of these lunkheads aren't trying to preserve any sort of ethic. It just seems like a reason to gang up and be a dick. It's not like, "We've got to save our little city."

Todd C: There are those people who stand up for, always talk about, and love the background and history of Pedro. Mike Watt (Minutemen, Firehose, Dos, Madonabees) is one of them.

Sean: You can tell the difference between almost gang mentality and people that are down to preserve — we're all down to preserve — the things that exist. When they tried to build a Taco Bell and wreck our houses, we all went to the city council meeting.

Retodd: Isn't there a Taco Bell several blocks from your house?

All: There's two.

Todd C: They wanted one every two blocks, pretty much.

Sean: They were calling it the Taj Mahal of Taco Bells.

Retodd: Wouldn't it be more like the *menage a trois* of Taco Bells?

Sean: As a side note, good old Bob Congelliere...

Todd C: There were fifteen of our friends at this hearing and there was one guy that was for Taco Bell that was a citizen that lived in San Pedro. It was my crazy uncle that I didn't even know existed. [in uncle voice] "My name's Bob Congelliere and I

love Taco Bell."

Casey: And that was his only defense.

Todd C: [still in uncle voice] "It's supposed to be the Taj Mahal of Taco Bells."

Sean: [in goofy voice] "I love Taco Bell."

Todd C: And there's a fucking Taco Bell on 10th Street and on 1st. So they need one on 4th Street? I don't know. Poor Uncle Bob. He's a championship swimmer, I hear.

Sean: He probably gets a six pack of tacos and starts doing the back stroke.

Retodd: There's a lot of anti-establishmentarianism in your lyrics. Is that intentional?

Todd C: I don't think anything's intentional.

Retodd: But there's a definite recurring theme. In "50 Geniuses," you say "they only wanna raise you only if you get them high," and in "String," it's "Sometimes a string's just a fucking string."

Sean: It's not like a super-acute attack on anything in particular, but I think for all of us it's an inherent thing. It's just something that just kind of exists. I think we're all here and we all believe what we believe for a reason. And getting into punk rock and stuff like that has an effect on how you view the world. We never use rhetoric.

Todd C: I don't want to ever get accused of sloganizing or anything like that.

Sean: Everything's always very personal, but there is an underlying anti-establishment vibe underneath.

Todd C: Even saying that bugs me, but at the same time, only because, if you're in a punk band, you're lumped in with all the other punk bands and then, all of a sudden, you're lumped in with all the bands that are lumped in with the punk bands that will listen to Propagandhi and go, "I'm gonna write about this, too." And they just have no idea what they're talking about, for one thing. They have no idea on how to write a song and that's the worst thing.

Sean: You have to talk about what you know. Real feelings. Even some of the greatest rock bands have that air of rebellion. It's not necessarily like Crass but it's like, "My Generation." We're fucked up but who cares.

Retodd: Sean, do you have a flamboyantly gay hip hop side project?

Sean: Well, what it was is uhhh, is there was a time where I borrowed this guy's four track before I had my own. Where the idea originally came up was when we were on tour in Canada, me and Greg from The Grumpies were bored out of our fucking minds and thought it would be a funny idea to make a fake band compilation and so we're writing all these names in a notebook and the idea was his part would be all these fake Huntsville, Alabama bands and I'd be all the fake Pedro bands. The whole concept behind it was you get whatever small group of friends and you get all these fake





last tour.

Todd C: Tour makes you hate work.

Casey: Yeah.

Todd C: I'm into it now, when I'm getting to a point where I want to work more hours because I'll get paid more hours and I actually like the job that I'm at. But, when you go on tour, when you get back, you're just not into that mode. It takes at least a month. It's just like the whole drug thing. If you do drugs, you're pretty much a loser, right? But, when you're sitting there actually on drugs, you're like, "Hm. This is good. This is how I want to live. I don't want to wake up in the morning and have to work for somebody that I don't really like." But when you're off drugs, you're like, "What are those losers doing?" I don't know if that makes sense. But when you're actually on tour, you get into the mode that you can't really break out of until being back home for a few months and you're actually settled and you're content and you're always thinking, "Is somebody else making me feel content about this job or am I making myself feel content about it?" You just get to a point of questioning your head. Especially on weed, man.

Casey: Paranoid.

Sean: How do I feel obsolete? I'd have to say that the biggest thing is that I don't understand or enjoy pop culture after 1985. Everyone's all into these shitty TV programs. What's that one that everyone watches on Thursday? *Dawson's Creek*? Friends that I value, friends that I think are intelligent get into these lame TV shows and these lame pop references. If I watch TV, I'll watch *The Simpsons*. I do like new movies. Movies are coming our all right, more or less. I don't give two shits about — everyone loves Christina Aguilera — people that I know. People that I sit down and try to have a conversation with and they'll bring that up. Their whole lives are surrounded by reading shitty magazines and watching crappy TV and I just can't relate to it.

Todd C: It's weird because when Nirvana was huge and all these bands were coming out, I actually liked the mainstream, sorta. I could look back at it now and say that that's way better than what's going on now or before that, because before that, it was New Kids On The Block and Michael Jackson ruled for ten years and now he's back. What the fuck is all that about? People totally destroyed New Kids On The Block and they tore down their posters of Joey McIntyre. The next thing you know, their daughters are into the Backstreet Boys. I know new babies are born every day and they don't know about New Kids On The Block, and they're going to like something like New Kids On The Block, but I just don't know how history can repeat itself so bad. Seriously, it's like Hitler.

Sean: The band that you like shows up in a shitty magazine like *Spin*. Like, if Nirvana — I love reading about Nirvana. I loved

bands spanning all these genres — emo, deathmetal — whatever you could conjure up. The Pink MCs was one of the names I came up for a flamboyantly gay hip-hop thing. So, I got back — it was something you just say on a whim and it just stuck with me — so I decided to buckle down and do it. That was one of the bands that I recorded. I got a couple of friends to do that.

Retodd: Can you give us a sample lyric?

Sean: [smiling, embarrassed]

Todd C: "Sperm don't burn unless it's got the germ in it."

Sean: "I'm a cum clucker. I'm a cocksucker. Who needs a pussy when I make a man's butt pucker." ... so, it wasn't really a side project. We never performed.

Casey: There was almost a performance, though.

Sean: I think the other guys got cold feet. It's a commitment.

Todd C: Even Hal had his second thoughts about it, actually playing live. He's like, "Dude, once it gets serious and we're actually singing these lyrics. We're not gay, but..."

Sean: The only worry I had was that you're — if you're a homophobe, you're not going to sing these lyrics, not even in jest. I was kind of worried if we became a real band, would we be offending people who were really gay? I don't know. It seems kind of silly. It was all in good humor.

Retodd: Individually, you have to answer this question. In which way do you feel obsolete?

Todd C: Computers are taking everybody's jobs away. That's one reason. That song, that *Twilight Zone* part (the sound bite) was actually inserted into that song afterwards. The lyrics are pretty much about *Silicon Valley* and how they work people into doing the grind, man. And the next thing you know, you're in a job that's an internet startup and it's totally bountiful and you're making six figures a year, and the next thing you know, you're not. Because they're just going to find parts to replace everything.

Casey: Lately, I've been having a hard time coming to grips with reality. [lots of laughter] Trying to work and make rent and stuff. It's been really hard for me since our

Nirvana. I thought they were a great band. In pop culture, per se, just because something is popular, just because it's something everyone else is into, doesn't negate the fact that I can get into to it. That was a time for the mainstream where I had some interest in it, where Nirvana was peaking.

Todd C: When they were on top of the whole fuckin' world, you actually sorta wanted to watch the American Music Awards or the MTV Music Awards just out of curiosity's sake.

Sean: Just to see the wacky shit they might do or the sarcasm or the cynicism.

Casey: At least they were a rock band.

Todd C: A rock band that was good. No matter what, they were great.

Sean: They wore shitty clothes, had fucked up hair.

Todd C: Nowadays, the American Music Awards were on two days ago and last night I found out because I saw a billboard. There's no way in hell. What's going to be on there? Shit you've never even heard of.

Matt: When you said that about the American Music Awards, don't you think that also comes with age? Certain things that you used to think as marginally important become obsolete? As you get older, you lose touch with it.

Todd C: I seriously always think about that and I think, What if Limp Bizkit is the Nirvana for nowadays? What if Limp Bizkit is as good as Nirvana? If I was ten years younger, would I like Limp Bizkit the same way as I like Nirvana? Fuck no. No way in hell.

Matt: When I first started my construction job, when I was eighteen, I remember asking one of my co-workers who was really into classic rock. He loved Led Zeppelin. He was thirty. I asked him, "Hey, what do you think of these new bands?" and he said, "Oh, I don't follow that stuff any more." And I was, "Oh, I'll always be in touch with it." Then, a few years ago, I was like, "Fuck, I'm out of touch."

Sean: The thing is, too, is that opposed to your average thirty-something construction worker guy that's into classic rock, we're in an active band. We go see bands a lot. We read fanzines. We buy records. We listen to not as much new stuff, sure, but we're definitely very exposed to it.

Todd C: We definitely — and I can say "we" because these guys are my brothers — we all have listened to a band that either we know or they're a band that started just like us, as an underground punk band, and I know we listen to that at least three times a week. A lot of people call me jaded because I hate a lot new shit that's coming out, but in my

mind, I think I'm hopeful. I'm actually worried that there's not going to be new shit.

Sean: There's great bands out there. You talk about being in touch. How more in touch can you be than going on tour and seeing a young band that kicks ass, like The Arrivals. You stumble upon a band like that and they're guys just like us. They're as underground as you get. Who's heard of them?

Todd C: I feel fully out of touch and I do a record label and I work at a distribution company that pretty much specializes in small bands, small labels. Nothing's a Lookout or an Alternative Tentacles, even. When I first started working there, I looked at all the bands, and I'm like, "Who is this?" and everyone's calling, "Oh, we need that record really bad. This is flying out the store." And I felt like this old, bitter fool who just didn't know what was going on and I listen to the records. A lot of them I just

don't get. All it is, is that you come up with a name that's really long, like We Will Show Up At Your House And Kill Your Mother and that's the name of the band and that's pretty much what's going on, and you put on the record and it doesn't sound anything like we're going to come to your house to kill your mother. There's sort of a pattern of that and I'm not really interested in. I don't think of myself as being jaded, just not interested in that. I think it's whack and they should give it up.

Retodd: On that tip, you guys opened for AFI.

Todd C: Speaking of whack. [laughter]

Sean: That Son Of Sam, boy, woosh.

Retodd: To put this into perspective, how much did you guys get paid to play The Palace, which holds about 1,000 people, plus or minus?

Sean: They gave us fifty bucks. [serious] And the singer's pants. [joking]

Retodd: For the entire band?

Todd C: Yeah.

Matt: No shit?

Retodd: AFI's rationale behind that is? I'm just postulating here, but they must have made \$10,000 off that show. Couldn't they kick down some love? (After these two shows, on the strength that the shows were sold out, AFI penned a deal with Dreamworks. —Retodd)

Todd C: That's the thing I don't want to ever understand. We're not pulling in all

these people. I was actually making jokes on stage. "Okay, you guys are going to leave after we play, but make sure you see AFI. They're great." It's not like that. I wish it was.

Sean: Unfortunately, we're not going to be sucking any of their assholes in the recent future.

Todd C: It puts us in a weird position, 'cause we're not a fan of the band. Their booking agent wanted us to play. If they call us up and they want us to play a show, it's "Yeah, thanks." They're doing us a favor. We play for free all the time and sometimes we get paid a lot of money but we don't really have that much money to be crying about. We could easily pull, "We used to pack this place in our last band," and blah, blah, blah, but that's just stupid. At the same time, we should have gotten two hundred bucks for those two shows.

Sean: And the thing is, too, we got asked to play these shows. It's not like we're like, "Come on, man, we just got done eating milk and cookies and we want to play with AFI." Kick the old guys a couple hundred. We're willing to work for our dollar. We have no delusions of what we are. We just like what we do and we try to put on a good show and try to do good songs. We don't walk around with an attitude. We don't demand too much. It's kind of a double-edged sword. We're not out there going, "We were in FYP and we deserve this much money." On the reciprocal, sometimes we're a little too lax. We're not businessmen. That's not what we're in a band for.

Todd C: I don't want to get into the position where people will say of us, "Yeah, they'll do it for fifty bucks."

Sean: "We can do them for fifty bucks."

Todd C: We know the difference between earning the money and just getting paid that amount of money because if we play a show where pretty much two-thousand kids are waiting to see Davey with his... I'm not going to get into that. They're pretty much there to see AFI. We didn't earn the money. Probably five people came to see us, maybe. So, we got half of those five people's ticket price. It was probably twenty bucks. But, if we play a place that we're headlining and a hundred people show up, then I would hope to get one hundred, two hundred bucks. If you break it down like that and actually get a business sense of that, you'll be all right. A lot of bands like to take a lot more than they earned. Just because they're headlining doesn't mean shit.

Retodd: So, Casey, how did Todd mutilate your ear?

Todd C: Aw, man. I was starting to feel good here.

Casey: Well, in New Orleans this last tour, Todd does this thing where he flips the guitar around his body. His guitar's flying around his body and he smacks me on the side of the head. My ear busts open blood and stuff.



Todd C: What sucks about that...

Casey: I don't think he's done it since.

Todd C: I did. I won't do it now when it's, "This show's rad. I'm all fucked up."

It was a great show and it went "tonk." The thing of it is was that the first week of tour was really, really bad playing-wise. We just barely get to the show. The first couple songs are great. We're playing good. People are into it. So, I'm, "Yeahh!" Hits him in the ear. He just goes down. Troy fucking stops playing drums, jumping out from his kit like he's going to beat me up or something. "What happened to Chachi?" Sean: "You were hitting him."

Casey: It's better now. It's just a little scar. It was tender for a good couple weeks on tour.

Sean: There's a bit of an emotional scar.

Casey: I think Todd was a little bit more freaked out than me. I couldn't sleep for two weeks on my left side. There was definitely blood running down my neck.

Todd C: It was definitely a gross-some scene.

Casey: It was the fourth song we were playing so it was really early in the set. It just totally knocked me. "Whoa, what's going on? Are we still playing? I'm standing. Okay, that's good."

Matt: Did the crowd scream for more?

Todd C: They were pissed at me. They all wanted my blood. "You got Chachi."

Everyone likes Chachi. Nobody likes me. Nobody likes the old men in the band.

Casey: Yeah, they chant for me sometimes.

Retodd: So, Todd, you were a professional skater, were you not?

Todd C: [lying] No.

Retodd: Is it true that you left one of the last messages on the skater Mark "Gator" Anthony's machine?

Todd C: The night before he turned himself in.

Retodd: For what?

Todd C: For raping and killing a girl and stuffing her into a surfboard bag.

Casey: It was his girlfriend, right?

Todd C: No. It was his girlfriend's friend. She was coming over to console him.

Sean: This is just in reflection. Your message was, "Did you kill that bitch yet?"

[laughter]

Todd C: No. We used to go down to San Diego a lot and stay with our friend and crank call people and skateboard and just do boy things and went to Tony Hawk's ramp to skate it and Gator was there and was like, "So, what's going on?" I'm all, "Nothing. What are you doing?" He's like, "Nothing." I'm like, "Who are you riding for now?" because he was off of a company. And he's all, "Jesus Christ." I'm all, "Is that a new company?" I seriously thought he was talking about a new skateboard company. He's like, "You know what I mean. You should ride for Him. I know you like the punk rock music and shit like that, but that's going to lead you to the devil." I was, "Yeah, whatever." So, of



TODD C: I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT MY DAD'S BALLS, ALL RIGHT? I'LL TALK ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE EXCEPT MY DAD'S BALLS.

THEY'RE FANTASTIC BALLS, OBVIOUSLY.

course we found our new victim to crank call that night. We called him, "This is satan. We know what you've done." And he really did something and we didn't know. I swear we didn't know.

Retodd: So, the next day the cops visited you?

Todd C: No, no. His outgoing message was like this: "Hey, this is Mark. I'm not going to be around. You can leave a message but I'm not going to get back to you. Praise the Lord." The reason he was leaving that message was because he was going to jump in front of a train and his friend found out what he was going to do and talked him out of it and the next day he turned himself in, because he'd already

killed that girl.

Matt: His girlfriend dumped him, right?

Todd C: His girlfriend dumped him. This girl, her best friend, came over to console him and he just went crazy on her.

Retodd: And all of those events affected the skate video you were working on, didn't it?

Todd C: Yeah. We were doing what I think was the first-ever skate/horror movie. It was crazy because at the time of it, our company – it was me and Mike Smith, pretty much – two guys that didn't really attract too many kids that really wanted to buy boards, so it was pretty much the rugged, bearded vert guys would buy our boards and we were looking for new

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riders and Gator was one of them. I think he was born again because of what he did, but I could be totally wrong. "I've got to find a way out of this. I must look for Christ. He's going to lead me out of this wreck I've made for myself." I was doing this horror video, just skaters chopping people's heads off, as a joke, you know? The video was almost totally edited. All I had to do was put the credits on and I found out this happened so I had to put a disclaimer: "We didn't really do this, like that other guy."

Retodd: Sean, what happened the last time you inadvertently played a skinhead's birthday?

Sean: It was out in Pacoima. The show sounded okay. We didn't know what to expect, except it was a birthday party for this guy, pretty cool dude. He was going to give us a hundred bucks and there was going to be beer and one of them little blow-up bouncy rooms.

Retodd: Woo!

Sean: We get there and say, "Where the fuck are we going?" Pacoima? Who goes here? It's a place you get dropped off." We show up to the house. The guy whose birthday it was was kind of skinhead-ish. He wasn't wearing a Skrewdriver t-shirt. He was really nice, a real cordial dude, really stoked on us playing. More people started showing up. A majority of the people showing up were Mexican guys with white pride hats, swastika tattoos, and they looked like gangsters. They didn't have flight jackets and shaved heads but they were all totally down for being a nazi and shit. It was really weird. So, we set up and we start playing and are kind of skeptical and we're kinda freaking out, thinking we should just get out of here. But we go play our set anyway. There's a song, "Ian Stuart," that Todd wrote about the guy from Skrewdriver and how he died. He introduced the song, "How many of you out here know who Ian Stuart is?" The crowd roared, "Yeah!" He's like, "How many of you are big Skrewdriver fans?" More cheering. Todd's all, "This song's about how he died in a car accident and we're pretty happy it happened." Just blatantly, fuck you. It was commendable, but dangerous.

Todd C: You know what happens when I get beer in me.

Sean: Let's just say that the most pit started in towards the band. We're playing the entire song and the audience is, "Grrr," like *Day of the Dead* or something and Jed (FYP's bassist) is looking really scared, standing right in front of his amp and some guy feigned to punch him, pulled it back, and Jed fell over the amp. And the guy's all, "That pussy fell

over the amp and I didn't even hit him."

Todd C: He flinched over his amp.

Sean: We stopped the song. It was crazy. Some people seemed to be coming towards us. Some people seemed like they were going to fight each other. Next thing you know, it's this huge, confusing scene. We're like, "Let's get our shit in the van. Let's get the fuck out of here." Opened the van door and we're just throwing our shit in the van. Tossing it. Not taking apart the drums or anything. We all get in the van and people are punching the van and rocking the van. Gun shots fire out and we peeled the fuck out of there.

Todd C: We were doing weird body counts. "Everybody here? Everybody



TOYS THAT KILL

here?" We had a lot of skinhead incidents. That's something that totally amazes me when I look back. The most retarded, stupidest punk band could get a rise out of the most retarded, stupidest people.

Casey: I remember going to see you guys a few times and Jed getting chased by a bunch of skinheads.

Todd C: Because he would always try to make out with their girlfriends. Even the ones with the chelseas.

Retodd: The colander cut?

Todd C: Yup.

Retodd: Switching gears altogether, you have a song called "Hare Ruya." I have no idea who or what that is.

Todd C: It's this guy in Japan. His business went down, he had a family, the economy was really bad. He went and bought some boxing gloves and at two in the morning, stood out by the bars and charged people ten dollars to box the shit out of him. He'd tell people, "I can put my dukes up this high," [at cheek level] but you can hit me as much as you want." He would just sit there and take it. He made money, got out of debt.

Retodd: He wouldn't fight back?

Todd C: No, he couldn't fight back. He would guard his face. For a minute or two. He's probably still doing it.

Retodd: How is Toys That Kill like Spinal Tap?

Todd C: We actually tried to do that Stonehenge thing.

Sean: But we couldn't get the dwarf.

Todd C: I get cold sores sometimes.

Retodd: What's the most endearing expression of fandom that you've seen in any of the bands you've been in?

Casey: There's this kid I brought backstage at the Palace. He was at one of our last shows and he was talking to me. I knew I knew him from somewhere, but he was just some kid I'd met somewhere. He wanted to

get his album signed. I said, "I'll bring you backstage." It's upstairs, behind all of this security. He was so stoked on it. He's like, "Yeah, Chachi, yeah." Pretty cool.

Sean: There's definitely loads of FYP tattoos, and shit like that, but with Toys That Kill, the tattoos are just starting to come out. [laughter] I'm hoping that some guy will come up to me and it'll say "Cole" (Sean's last name) in old English.

Retodd: Give me your step-by-step thought process after your van hit the deer.

Todd C: My knee was on top of Sean's throat.

Sean: I've got a buff neck.

Todd C: That freaked me out because I thought somebody died.

Casey: Because you were sleeping.

Todd C: Yeah. I flew off the loft. I woke up in mid-air.

Casey: Flying over me.

Todd C: I cleared him and landed on Sean.

Retodd: Who was driving?

Todd C: Jack. (Their roadie and merch guy.)

Casey: Troy was riding shotgun. (Their former drummer.)

Sean: Troy and Jack were up at the front.

Todd C: They liked to hit each other a lot.

Sean: They were playing with their Hello Kitty pencils, listening to this techno music that was giving me nightmares. So, I'm in progress of a nightmare that I'm trapped in machinery or something, just falling through gears and stuff, and I wake up from the nightmare [jerks straight] – you know when you're on the freeway and you're not paying attention for a second and you stop? It feels like you're in control. You skid a little bit. It was this veering and skidding that seemed so out of control that I was like, "I'm going to die."

Casey: I thought we were going to flip.

Sean: "This is it. I'm dead." When I think of death, I always think I'm going to die on tour, I'm going to die in a car. This seems to be my destiny. Destiny unfolds. Jack is fucking freaking out. Todd's flying on my neck. All this shit's flying.

And the van comes to a stop.

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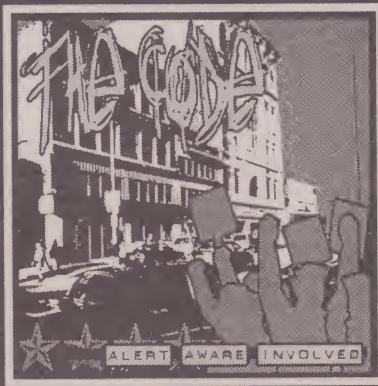
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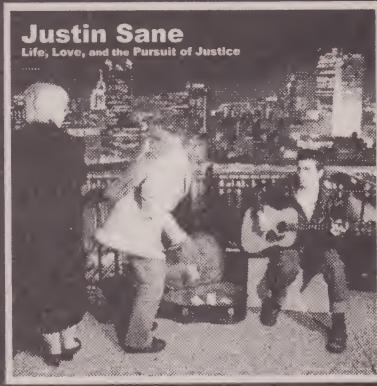
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I thought we hit something like another car. I thought we were in a car accident. First, I'm like, somebody's dead. We're alive, that's great, but somebody got mauled. Somebody's dead. Somebody's car flipped over and is on fire. I'm like, "What happened?" "We hit a deer." I'm like, "Oh, okay," thinking the van's totaled and fucked. It all went in this transgression, these steps. And when we looked, just fucking knocked the headlight out.

Todd C: Duct taped it right back on.
Casey: Missed the radiator by an inch. I saw the deer first and I was laying down in the back. I kinda look up to see what's going on up front. And I see this deer. "Oh shit!" Jack locks up the brakes and starts swerving.

Retodd: Fifteen years ago, name the album you were listening to and playing along with, even in your head.

Todd C: Millions of Dead Cops. Either that or *Kings of the Wild Frontier* by Adam and the Ants, but stick with the first one. It sounds cooler.

Casey: Probably, Go-Go's, *Vacation*. I was like ten years old. I was into the Stray Cats, too. Those were the two bands I knew about.

Sean: I definitely have to say *Kill Them All*, Metallica.

Retodd: Todd, you also own Recess Records. Is that correct?

[long pause]

Sean: He'll sell it to you for eighty bucks.

Todd C: I was going to sell it to Sean for eight hundred dollars.

Retodd: Does anybody work for you?

Todd C: Not any more. Nope.

Retodd: Which titles keep you in business?

Todd C: What do you mean? The Dwarves do good, all the FYP ones do good. Those are the constant back catalog sellers.

Retodd: How long have you been doing it for?

Todd C: Since 1989. The first piece of vinyl came out in '90, but I count the demo tapes and shit. Don't let people steer you wrong on that.

Retodd: So, Sean and Casey, what do you do for your day jobs?

Casey: I'm a part time dock worker. Everybody from my high school works there, too. It's kinda gross. When I was having trouble dealing with reality – an example is – I go to

this place and I pretty much have a number, and a letter, and I have to wait until my number comes up and then I can work. So you just have to hang out. It's just like recess. It's just a bunch of people hanging out. It's a bunch of people that would never talk to me back in high school. Now they're like, "What's up? Cool. Yeah." I went there and I was just standing there, trying not to look at anyone in the eye, hanging out by myself while everyone has all their friends around them. I just ended up leaving. I didn't even care if I got a job that day.

Sean: I used to cook pizzas, man. I moved furniture. Cater. Just a bunch of odd jobs. I recently got a job building amplifiers for Matchless Amplifiers. Haven't started it yet, but it feels pretty good not to have a loser job; something where you're going to learn something. We've always been – through the course of the years – we've always been busy enough with the band where I consider that my entire life and it's been a lot slower and I want to work at this place and I think I can

save a lot of money and get better stuff. Better music stuff. Not like a year's supply of Cheez Whiz.

Todd C: Or a double burger. Going large.

Retodd: Someone explain Porch Core.

Todd C: No.

Sean: I hate to be the one that break this one to the public, but...

Todd C: Porch Core is just the figment of you lame cunts' imaginations. It was written on a bathroom wall.



TOYS THAT KILL

Sean: Porch Core is no more, no less than this batch of stickers we made on tour in '98 or '99 and we made these stickers and slapped them up everywhere and this band called the Jag Offs, my roommate's band, they have a song called "Porch Core," and it just seems magazines and kids think it's some scene. It's not anything. We have porches.

Todd C: It's about sitting on a porch, drinking a 40, and shitting your pants and then you go to sleep. Pretty inspiring, huh?

Sean: I think as a group of friends, when we all first started hanging out with each other, it got to a point where things were, as a big group of people, very productive. Not necessarily changing the world or nothing, but we used to do a lot of things. Like building a skate ramp. In the process of making the video, doing skits, the fake band comp. Things, little activities that we'd all do as a group of people. But people move and people fuck each other's girlfriends. [nervous laughing] And they go off in different directions. All the friends are still pretty much intact, but it's not as tight as it used to be. When our old bass player, Joe, died it really got a big group of people in really close.

Todd C: Just as fast as it brought everyone close...

Sean: Everything sort of just disintegrated.

Todd C: But it took years to do that.

Sean: Yeah. It's not bad. It's just a natural thing. To get to the gist of Porch Core, it's just... nothing.

Retodd: Todd, why do you wear the beanie all the time?

Sean: Show him, Todd. You're fucking bald. [laughter]

Retodd: I was impressed that you wore the beanie indoors, in the same city on the same day that a Minnesota Vikings player died in practice of a heat stroke.

Todd C: I did it because I wanted to... wanted to... prove a point. You've got to hydrate yourself, man. I don't know. It's the same reason you wear a shirt and pants. My head is like my dick and balls. I don't want anyone to see it.

Sean: It gives him a more dramatic look.

Todd C: You don't know what's underneath here. You never will.

Retodd: What's the biggest obstacle you've overcome to be in this band?

Sean: It's not as pinpointed. I can't think of, "Oh, I flipped my mom off to be in the band," or anything. I think I sacrificed progression in a money sense. I could have gone to school. I could have money and things like that. I'd rather be poor and live like shit and do what I love to do than be rich or even make a sufficient amount of money and be miserable at what I'm doing.

Casey: I had to blow all of my money on a van so we could tour.

Sean: [happily] Right on.

Todd C: There are only obstacles to do the band.

Sean: Sacrifice is probably a better world.

Todd C: There is nothing else that I could possibly do. I have a day job to bring in the rent and I love it and I love the people who work there, but what I really want to do is the label, and especially the band first.

Sean: You have to subsidize. You get to be thirty – not that I'm thirty – you can't help but feel pressure. You're born of something. You're not like some alien with some inhuman concepts of life. You're going to feel pressures, no matter how stout you are in your beliefs. You go to Thanksgiving. "Why aren't you married? Where are my grandkids?" "Mom, I'm not thirty yet." Or like, "Shit, man, I don't have a DVD player."

Todd C: I just got one. No pressures here. My parents are cool with me.

Sean: I'm inheriting a computer that has Windows 95 on it. Talk about slow. It was free, man.

Todd C: Everyone has pressures, but when you're coming up to thirty. It's a weird thing, but you've got to decimate before you get decimated. That's it.

Sean: Pressure is what keeps everything in perspective. If everything was one-sided, where would you be? You have to weigh and balance your priorities and what means the most to you. It makes your endeavors more important. I'm not giving up, man.



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PUNK ROCK GIRL

CHRISTINA WHITETRASH



"CHRISTINA," "WHITETRASH," "TRASH," "TRASHY," "THE TRASH," "WHISKEY TANGO," "WT," AND "BITCH"... WHAT DO ALL THESE NAMES HAVE IN COMMON? THEY ALL BELONG TO ONE TOUGH-ASS CHICK, THE TRASH. YOU MAY RECOGNIZE HER FACE AND BLUE LIPS FROM THE BACK COVER OF NOFX'S *PUMP UP THE VALUUM* LP CHOMPING EVER SO COYLY ON A CANDY NECKLACE. SHE IS ALSO THE BRAINS, BEAUTY, SMILE, AND VOICE BEHIND ONE OF INDEPENDENT PUNK'S MOST SUCCESSFUL RADIO DEPARTMENTS. IF YOU WANNA SELL OUT, THIS IS THE LADY TO TURN TO. WE'RE NOT SHITTIN' YOU. WRITE HER CARE OF RAZORCAKE AND SHE'LL REVEAL THE POWERFUL PEOPLE THAT SHE REPRESENTS.

IF YOU'RE LUCKY ENOUGH, YOU CAN FIND TRASHY OUT ON THE TOWN WITH HER CREW, THE BITCHES IN THE BACK, (7" COMING SOON) AND SHE CAN ALSO BE FOUND AT THE LA GUN CLUB, WHERE SHE ENJOYS SHOOTING OFF A FEW ROUNDS BEFORE HEADING OVER TO HAMA FOR SOME YELLOWTAIL, ALBACORE, SAKE, AND A LARGE ASAHI! WRAP IT UP WITH A BOW: POWER, GUNS, BITCHES, SUSHI, PUNK ROCK, A BUNNY NAMED MIKE, AND SHE'LL SMACK YER ASS TO MAKE YOU SHIT DIAMONDS. SHE SHOULD COME WITH A WARNING LABEL.

440s / CHICKENHAWKS,
The: *Sumthin' Sleazy*:
Split CD

Hot damn holy hell, I've done died and gone straight to hedonist heaven where pure skull-crushin' rock-'n'roll primitivity rules supreme, 'cause two of the most outrageously rockin' bands around today aurally strut their stuff on this here killer-crazed disc! The 440s are wilder and more ferocious than ever. It's as if they effortlessly outdo themselves each and every time, soundin' uncannily like a rocket-boosted eighteen-wheeler carryin' a raucously loud cargo of Motorhead, Joan Jett, AC/DC, and The Heartbreakers careening out of control and colliding head-on into a tanker-truck loaded to the gills with highly flammable raw power. Their voluptuously bodacious vocalist, Miss Sparkle Plenty, always without fail gives my ears a full ragin' hard-on that makes me squirm in my seat until I can no longer see straight. Wooo-hooo! And the frenetically untamed instrumentation is nothing less than a world-ending roar of nuclear sonic conflagrations that'd make Satan himself duck and run for cover like a whimpering lil' limp-wristed pantywaist. Yep, The 440s get my motor a-revvin' big time! As usual, The Chickenhawks sonically knock the dookie outta me and set my heart aflame with their sinfully delicious swirl of sultry hell-vixen vocals, greasy slide-guitar grit, and voodoo-laden swampbeat rhythm section. And this is their best stuff yet, I shit you not! Imagine Dinah Cancer frontin', The Cramps if they hailed from the fog-enshrouded murky-watered boonies of the Mississippi Delta. Ooooo-weee, Betsy Badly's seductively tempestuous voice, without a doubt, gets my manhood uncontrollably aroused and my insides all fuzzy and warm! Hell yeah, The 440s and The Chickenhawks sure know how to bring out the lewd and lively pervert in me, that's for sure! This decadently delightful disc has titillated my ears and teased my roguish old lost soul somethin' fierce. It's an absolute auditory wet dream! —Roger Moser, Jr.

(Steel Cage)

90 DAY MEN:
To *Everybody*: CD

To say this sucked would be giving it too much credit. —Jimmy Alvarado (Southern)

ANIMALS WITHIN ANI-
MALS: *Mono a Mono*: 2xCD

An amazing album! This double CD features a lot of pro-ape ideals. And we all know apes make better lovers. A huge list of



The music is so heavy and delivered with such force that the sound almost takes solid shape.

—Matt Average

music mixing geniuses have contributed to this record, most of them are names you might not recognize — but beware, you soon will. Both CDs feature samples galore — they have a major pro-sample idea as well. The CD claims that 92% of the material on this is "recycled." They even pass out "please sample" and "please remix" stickers in each case. The first track, "Hello," samples every fucking hello you can comprehend in music (from The Doors to Lionel Richie) into one hysterical and awesome song. Then you are thrown into organized chaos — samples of news programs, interviews, music, and beyond. Noise fans, sample fans, fine artists — fucking get this. One of my top releases of cultural onslaught in the world. —Sarah Stierch (Bad Taste)

ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE:
We Are... *the League*: CD

Like a breath of fresh air, the League comes along and clears my head of all the gobshite I've been forcing myself to listen to 'cause I put off reviewing all the "mystery meat" until the last minute. Never quite understood the skinhead fascination with this band. I mean, they look like bikers, complete with full coifs on their noggin! No matter. This, a re-release of their most famous LP coupled with assorted EP tracks, sounds just as blissfully obnoxious as it did when I first heard it years back and, strangely enough, "I Hate People" is still a pretty balls-on accurate anthem for me and how I perceive the world around me. —Jimmy Alvarado (Captain Oi!)

ARSONS, THE: *Whole Life Crisis*: CD

I know it's probably not their intention, but The Arsons have made one

ASSCHAPEL:

Total Worship: CD

With a name like Asschapel, you're either gonna rock or suck incredibly hard. Luckily, they're pretty good. Mid-tempo hardcore with almost more metal than is good for them, noisy breakdowns and a singer that's sure to develop throat cancer in a year or two if he keeps screamin' like that. Thumbs up. —Jimmy Alvarado (Twitch)

BAD RELIGION: The Process of Belief: CD

I waited for awhile to review this because I have a variety of ideas of how the review should be. I had a great idea in using the previous album covers to describe what each song sounded like. I tried but my computer kept crashing. I was going to do a historical, but that is what I used for the last two records. With nothing inspiring, I figured what the hell, this is what I am going to submit. I don't think many have read the previous reviews and it is informative to those not in the know. This release marks twenty years of releasing music as a band. At the beginning, they put out their self-titled 7" and the *How Can Hell Be Any Worse* LP. I'm not sure if they broke up but a few years later, they put a great but unappreciated record titled *Into the Unknown*. Punk credibility was lost. With a new line-up, which included Greg Hetson from the Circle Jerks, they released the *Back from the Known* EP the following year. 1988 came and the essential *Suffer* LP came out to much acclaim and fanfare. They were the shit again in punk circles. I heard a story from Fat Mike of NOFX saying that record changed the direction of his band. The band remained consistent while releasing many records up until the last Epitaph release *Recipe for Hate*. That was a release that Atlantic and Epitaph both put out. After that record, guitarist Mr. Brett quit the band to run Epitaph full time and deal with his own personal demons. A number of records on the major were put out and they finally got out of the contract and returned to Epitaph. Mr. Brett rejoined and re-energized the band by bringing back Epitaph into the band's sound. The entire record is strong from start to finish. The tri-guitar attack of Mr. Brett, Brian Baker and Greg Hetson create a wall of sound that hasn't been achieved by the band up to this point. Jay Bentley ties everything together with his solid bass playing. Newcomer Brooks Wackerman, formerly of Suicidal Tendencies, is one fine drummer. Starting with "Supersonic," "Prove It" and "Can't Stop This," BR rage through

three songs in a matter of four minutes. To catch your breath, they slow things down with the anthemic "Broken." They bring the tempo back up on tracks "Destined for Nothing," "Materialist," "Kyoto Now!" and "Sorrow." Once again, we are allowed to recover by playing my favorite song (my wife's also) "Epiphany." Now it's time to bring things to a close with five punk songs ("Evangeline," "The Defense," "The Lie," "You Don't Belong" and "Bored and Extremely Dangerous") that are trademark to their history. This album is the most balanced record they have released in years. My wife and I have been listening to this for close to a month straight. This is a band that I personally have been listening to for twenty years and are still one of my favorites. There are not enough words that I can use to describe how much I enjoy this. —Donofthedead (Epitaph)

BELTONES, THE: *Cheap*

Trinkets: CD

This is barn-blazin', barroom-brawlin' punkrock lawlessness at its meanest, leanest, nastiest, and most nefarious. It's incorrigible and ungovernable, packing more of a wallopin' kick than an eight-ounce shot of pure unrefined Irish whiskey straight outta the jug without benefit of a throat-soothing chaser. Cacophonously akin to the Dropkick Murphys, the gruff'n'-gravelly, ruckus-inciting vocals are vigorously complemented by a full-throttle surge of fiery juggernaut instrumentation that had my feet a-stompin' so fiercely, big ol' jagged chunks of concrete were ricocheting from the floor and careening across the room like sizzlin' shards of shrapnel randomly flyin' all over the fuckin' place. Hell yes indeed, laddy-boy, these insurgent Celtic-influenced punk'n'roll sounds have slapped my rosy-red facial cheeks silly, splintered my spine into numerous fragmented segments of bone, and rowdily ripped me a new backside until I could no longer sit still! Wooo-hooo, my ears will forever eagerly embrace such belligerent auditory decadence as this! The Beltones are definitely my kinda bottle of aural ale, and I fully intend to continuously crank *Cheap Trinkets* to the max until I'm no longer able to hear myself breathe. —Roger Moser, Jr. (TKO)

BLATZ/FILTH: *Shit*

Split: Split CD and LP

Rock and roll! One of the best split LPs of all time, originally on Lookout, re-released by Life is Abuse on both CD and LP for your

consuming and listening pleasure! Classic East Bay madness! Blatz is my favorite of the two — screamy boy and girl vocals. Think X on crack. And then there's Filth. And if Filth isn't punk, then I don't know what is. I have a friend who's mostly into theatre and isn't punk at all, and "Fuk Shit Up" by Blatz is one of his favorite songs of all time! He says he has never heard so much screaming in a two-minute period! The LP is just the Shit Split; if you get the CD, you'll also have all the 7"s. You must buy this album! If this were a cereal, it'd be Lucky Charms! Punk rock! —Maddy (Life is Abuse)

BLUE FLAMES, THE:

Drivin' N' Dyrin' In Texas: CD

This is primal voodoo-crazed rock'n'roll swagger at its sleaziest, naughtiest, and most outrageously immoral. It's savage and untamed Texas-style psychobilly madness that's as evil, vile, indecent, and debauched as a sweat-soaked free-for-all orgy in Hell but as sensual, sleek, and cool as a leather-jacketed Marlon Brando hoodlum casually struttin' his stuff in the primitive black-and-white world of *The Wild One*. Imagine a sadistic Betty Page goddess lewdly frontin' The Cramps; Johnny Cash as a vampiric leather-clad vixen backed by The Damned if they were a hootin'-and-hollerin' group of rockin' Mississippi Delta swamp-rats; a trashed-out Concrete Blonde thoroughly drenched in cheap booze, sloppy meaningless sex, and other delightfully taboo conjurations of the devil which eventually drain a man's soul dry; or X as a rowdy bunch of musical cattle-rustlin' bandits performin' in a ramshackle saloon along the tumbleweed-strewn streets of Dodge City during a raging apocalyptic dust-storm. Yep, this is rebellious sonic insolence at its loudest, liveliest, and most festive and boisterous! The seductive enchantress vocals are sultry, enticing, and unequivocally sin-inspiring to the point of erotically inducing a concrete-solid erection upon my penis; the dangerous and deadly guitar strafings are a frenetic flurry of conflagrant attitude-driven fury (beyond unbelievably bad-ass!); the bass and drums are an unholy cacophonous union of unbridled barbaric virility. Indeed, taken all together, these are the most sinfully sensational sounds to seduce my ears since my momma squeezed me out like a wet-nosed lil' puppy many, many moons ago! *Drivin' N' Dyrin' In Texas* is so aurally thunderous, it knocked a big ol' knot the size of Dallas upon my head and merci-



Punk classics, now available once again, as affordable "special European imports" are marked with (*****)



These are the top 7"s since the last mag.

Underground Medicine Mailorder, Connecticut

1. Tapeworm, 4 song EP '78 (*****)
2. Kill-a-watts/Catholics Boys (Electrorock)
3. Dils, *Class War/Mr. Big* (*****)
4. Brides, *Born in a Grave* (Sack of Shit)
5. Avengers, *We Are the One* (*****)
6. Stevie And The Secrets, *Gimme a Call* (Telegraph)
7. Ramones, *R.A.M.O.N.E.S.* (Desire)
8. 20 Dollar Whore, *Teenage Fuckin' Boredom* (Big Neck)
9. Bitter Pills, EP (Domesticity)
10. Dirtbombs, *Ode to a Black Man* (Sweet Nothing)
11. Various Artists, *Surprise Package Vol. 4* (Flying Bomb)
12. Randoms, *ABCD/Let's Get Rid of New York* (*****)
13. Dialtones/Alley Gators (Dessert Inn)
14. Hives, *Main Offender* (Big Wheel)
15. Numbers, *Letters* (Green Hell)
16. Reatards, *Get Out of Our Way* (Contaminated)
17. One Man Show Live, *Wrong, Wrong, Wrong* (G Boozy)
18. Skulls, *Life Ain't So Pretty* (Headline)
19. Wildebeests, *1996* (Smart Guy)
20. Cantankerous, *Ford-o-Matic* (Pitshark)

Disgruntled Mailorder, California

1. Skulls, *Life Ain't So Pretty* (Headline)
2. Nausea, *New Generation* (Freed For Freaks)
3. Flash Express, *Who Stole the Soul* (Revenge)
4. Bonecrusher, *For Your Freedom* (77 RPM)
5. Briefs, *Squash Me Like a Bug* (Sub Pop)
6. BellRays, *Suicide Baby* (No Tomorrow)
7. Kill-a-Watts, *Dig These Kids* (Yakisakana)
8. F Word, *Shut Down* (Posh Boy)
9. Hellacopters/Nitwitz (Rocket Dog)
10. Fu Manchu, *Pick Up Summer* (Elastic)
11. Sick Pleasure, *Destroy the Human Race* (*****)
12. Agent Orange, *Eldorado* (Posh Boy)
13. Starvations, *Shut Up Sirens* (Vinyl Dog)
14. Various Artists, *I Was a Teenage Plasmatic* (Johnny Cat)
15. Seeing Red/Human Alert (Mad Skull)
16. Various Artists, *Sick Kicks for Shock Rockers* (Violent Reaction)
17. Spittires/Hell Caminos (Rockin' Bones)
18. Dogs, *Class of 1970* (Dionysus)
19. Bodies, *3 Brand New Songs* (Hostage)
20. Stitches, *You Tear Me Out* (Dead Beat)

lessly pummeled my brains to a pulp before I ever knew what hit me (bruisin', battenin', and smashin' my brew-sloshed senses silly!). Hell yeh, that's exactly the reason The Blue Flames are still my all-time favorite lil' ol' band from Texxxas! —Roger Moser, Jr.

BONECRUSHER: *For Your Freedom: 7"*

Bonecrusher continues to live up to their name. Not only are they one of the most notorious OC bands playing right now, they have some of the biggest, meanest fans. So if you're sitting at home, toughguy, watching TV, thinking punk rock's not dangerous anymore when you watch Blink 182 prance and twinkle across the stage, I suggest you stand front and center at a Bonecrusher show so you can relive some fond memories of swallowing your own teeth and getting unapologetically impaled by a mic stand. I quite like Bonecrusher. Musically, they don't fuck around. They're lean, tight, and even quite hook-filled. Think of early Cocksparrer minus the accent, sped up and put through the Orange County fuck you filter. What makes the menace complete and realistically fucking scary is Raybo's presence as a frontman and his shitting-puppies-for-breakfast growl. At a time when once street warriors are vying for respectability and product sponsorship, Bonecrusher continues to work hard and pound out vicious slabs of vinyl. Three stompin' songs. —Todd (77 RPM)

BOXCAR SATAN:
Crooked Mile March: CD
What if the Jesus Lizard had been a blues band? Boxcar Satan is the answer. Anyone else out there remember the Beasts of Bourbon? *Crooked Mile March* is giving me Beasts flashbacks, a little less straight-ahead Stoogey and a little more atonal, balls-scraping-on-the-concrete Tom Waitsy. Traditional enough to cover "John the Revelator," nontraditional enough to include vibraphone, melodica, and accordion, and self-described as "no-account no-wave blues from San Antonio, Texas" (which sounds about right to me), Boxcar Satan takes more left turns in one song than many bands take in their entire careers. If any of this sounds at all enticing to you, twisted individual that you are, you owe it yourself to mosey over to <http://www.boxcarsatan.com/downloads.htm> where you can download seven different Boxcar Satan mp3 tracks for free (including four cuts from *Crooked Mile March*) and check this crazed shit out for yourself. —Aaron J. Poehler (Dogfingers)

CADILLAC BLINDSIDE: *The Allegory of Death and Fame: CD EP*

This kid's voice grates on me like a fucking chalkboard. You're standard EMOTional rock music where people put this shit on mixed tapes and mention it on their makeout-club.com profile. If you want something painfully generic music, they even sample fucking chanting monks. God. Stop. —Sarah Stierch (Fueled By Ramen)

CATHETERS, THE: *Static Delusions and Stone-Still Days: CD*

Has Mudhoney been reincarnated when they're not even dead? Is this sort of Buddha/ Star Trek transporter trick? The place is right. Seattle. Superfuzz? Check. Bigmuff? So hella muffy, you're gonna be picking pubes out of your teeth for weeks. Hell, they're even on early-Mudhoney's label. For the record, this boy loves early Mudhoney, and with that predilection firmly entrenched, the red carpet's rolled out to my eardrums and the Catheters leak right in like some medication that fucks with my

sense of balance and leaves a slight metallic taste on my tongue. The lead singer's got the Mark Arm-ish yelling/singing shift down perfectly. They've got the dichotomous garage/arena vibe down, kinda like how I'd imagine early Iggy and the Stooges shows were. I've seen this young quartet kick out some fierce girl-googlin' sets at my local record emporium and I can imagine 'em easily burning down a club, any size, Dresden style. This record sounds bigger than their earlier *Empty 7"* although it's an identifiable extension. The result is a big-sounding record without being pretentious or over-inflated. Big without trying way too hard. Big without relying on easy-to-spot tricks, beyond the fact that they just plain ol' rock and they've got a lot of sass. It's progressive in the fact that they transfuse new blood into older bodies of music without coming across as wanky "progressive rock" or rank amateurs that rest on cliches like crutches. Not bad at all. They'd be great on a bill with The Sign Offs. (See review this issue.) —Todd (Sub Pop)

CHOCOLATE KISS: *Set Yourself on Fire: CD*

I propose that henceforth, any band that scream-sings in that tuneless-and-proud-of-it manner (such as, say, Chocolate Kiss) shall be barred from referring to themselves as "pop" or being referred to as pop (such as in the Moodswing Records quote describing this disc as "the

breakthrough album for these purveyors of pop"). I mean, come on, when has that style ever been pop? Get a clue. If these guys really think they make pop music someone should hand them a copy of the top 40 — and not necessarily even the current top 40, ANY top 40 ever. This kind of music would more correctly be referred to as "college rock," and as "college rock" goes, it ain't bad. It ain't great either. But it most definitely ain't "pop." Also, I don't know that the world was crying out for a college-rock version of Supertramp's "The Logical Song." I know I wasn't, and hearing the slavishly imitative and utterly inconsequential version on *Set Yourself on Fire* certainly didn't win me over, though it does do me the service of incontrovertibly cementing my venture at these guys' correct classification in stone. That is to, say nothing proves you're a fucking college-rock band more than doing a shitty cover of "The Logical Song" by Supertramp and actually sticking it on your album for no other reason than you know stoned college radio DJs will play it at least once. —Aaron J. Poehler (Moodswing)

COMET GAIN: *Realistes: CD*

I can't believe I'm actually going to put this in writing, but I'm completely hooked on Comet Gain. It's my guilty pleasure these days. When I first looked at the cover of this album, I could tell it was unabashedly indie rock — exactly the kind of thing I usually make fun of. But Kill Rock Stars released it, and I used to like a lot of the stuff that KRS put out about ten years ago, so I decided to give it a chance. I figured I'd play one or two songs, think up some new indie rock jokes, then give this to someone else to review. But the first song, "The Kids at the Club," was really catchy, so I kept listening. The next song hit me with a blast of good Replacements memories, and the alternating female/male vocals really made it interesting. I kept listening to *Realistes* and caught touches of early Superchunk and touches of Bikini Kill from their final album, *Kill All American*. Okay, I thought. So it's indie rock. So what. I still like all the influences, so I'm not losing too many punk points. By the end of *Realistes*, though, all I could hear was Comet Gain. I didn't care about any of the buzz words or any of the divisions and subdivisions among musical genres. It's all about music being so good that it transcends all that shit. And Comet Gain definitely transcends. —Sean (Kill Rock Stars)

CREAM ABDUL BABAR: *The Catalyst to Ruins: CD*

Despite the misleading moniker (I was expectin' some half-assed pop-punk), Cream Abdul Babar crank out some pulverizing music. Somewhere in between hardcore and tech metal. An easy comparison would be Dead Guy, and Acme, but these guys make those two bands sound tame! The music is so heavy and delivered with such force that the sound almost takes solid shape. Definitely not something you put on for background music. Each song is steeped in tension and cold, dark tones. The lyrical content only makes things more uneasy; depression, betrayal, and murder. There's noisy breaks, intros, etc., and distortion that stabs through the air like a shank in the neck. They use the keyboard to generate an apocalyptic fee as well as create interesting dins and soundscapes. "A Guide to Home Ownership" is a short scraping soundscape that makes for a cool transition from the crushing "E is for Intelligent" to "Blown Goat." —M.Avg (At A Loss Recordings)

CROWD, THE: *Punk Off: CD*

I've heard some stories on this release, and I just can't seem to remember them while I am typing this. Something to the likes of the changing the artwork of the cover and title at the last minute. I go to *Razorcake* HQ to pick up my goodies out of my box. Low and behold, the new Crowd CD is in there. At first glance, I had to close my eyes from the overabundance of fluorescent colors used on the cover. It looked like a cover from the early '80s; a major label trying to sell new wave as punk. Once I was over that shocking experience, I read the title of this release. I'm sorry, but that is pretty bad. It insulted me for some reason. It just seemed so cheesy. I hope they are embarrassed because I was embarrassed for them. The saving grace? The music. I haven't listened or bought anything since the *A World Apart* LP, *Modern Machine 7"*, and comp tracks off *Beach Blvd.* and *Rodney on the Roq*. Now, that has been about twenty years since I paid any attention. I know they have been around recently since this here mag covered them in issue #2 and they played at a benefit for another mag. One thing I know from listening to this release is they sure haven't lost their chops. They continue on the OC beach punk sound that they helped form many years back. The songs are catchy and capture their live sound of that one gig I saw them last. You can hear where bands like Smogtown get their

influences. The packaging might be subpar, but the contents make up for it. —Donothedead (Unity Squad)

DAYCARE SWINDLERS:

In Loving Memory: CD

“Dictator” is a great song with a catchy singalong hook, and there are a few other really good ones on here, with bits of Misfits, a dash of the Clash and some mid-'80s NYC/DC synthesis, but then at times they lean dangerously close to raprock and they push the already embarrassing phenom of the “hidden bonus (bonus? my ass) track” to ridiculous new heights with a retarded country ditty and a seriously nauseating remix of “Dictator.” Here’s hoping you know how to program your CD player. —Cuss Baxter (Vile Beat)

DEADBOLT:

Hobo Babylon: CD

Back with another glorious yarn-spinner, Deadbolt has now ridden the rails with the FTRA (Freight Train Riders of America), a havoc-wreaking nationwide organization of ‘bos (hobos). Based on an unfinished true crime novel, *Hobo Babylon* is what’s come to be expected from Deadbolt but nothing short of a derailing. Gravelly, haunting vocals, polished miles of rumbling bass, warning-whistle guitar and squealing brake drums churn out a train wreck of an album. Obvious on-topic titles include “Hobo Babylon,” “Patches Rides the Rails” (yes, he’s had a career change), and “Drunk Guy on the Train,” replete with train yard sound effects and specialty lingo (short glossary included with scrapbook liner notes). Other tracks wander around the jealous death threats of “One Day I Will Kill You,” venomous spite for MIA drummer Les Vegas (who I hear is already sniveling about his involuntary inclusion) on “Po’ Boy,” Delta Blues harmonica and moonshine-inspired vocals on “Bitch Tried to Kill Me,” and disgrace for a murdered mafia member on “Who Whacked Pauly” (“They put him in the back of a Jap car.”). Added to that are the sextop purrs of Diana Death on “The Hearse,” an unlisted drunken attempt at “Little Bitty Pretty One” and my pick, the serial-killer love of “Creep Me” (“You don’t look like Sandra Dee, but you’re the only one who can creep me.”) Yes, I left out a few titles, but they’re good nonetheless. One of Deadbolt’s best albums to date. —Jessica (Cargo/Headhunter)

DEVOTCHKAS: *Live Fast...Die Young*: CD

Four very hot girls here all dressed up in the “official” punk rock gear complete with colored hair, mohawks and liberty spikes (picture a female Casualties). With this first impression, I expected some attitude and grittiness from their music like what I get from The Distillers. However, they come off too soft. I guess I shouldn’t have looked at them first. It’s not a bad CD. Kinda sounds like Fabulous Disaster or The Eyeliners with the vocals delivered a little bit faster. If you like those bands, you won’t have a problem here. It’s just that my eyes sent the wrong signal to my ears and vice versa. They both like what they sensed, they just didn’t jive. That doesn’t mean I won’t hesitate to check them out live. I love hot punk rock chicks! —Toby Tober (Punkcore)

DISASTER STRIKES:

Self-titled: CD

I’m at a loss of words here. I’m just going to rant. This is fucking amazing. More in the likes of old school hardcore more than anything else. Original in their writing and that sets them apart. They play a variety of styles that fall within the punk label. The lyrics are political in nature. They play fast, angry and pull no stops. I’m thinking early-to-mid ‘80s punk rock. I hear Black Flag, Negative Approach, and some others I can’t think of right now. It’s like finding a bag on the street and it has a cold six pack in it. You take it and drink it. —Donothedead (Rodent Popsicle)

DWARVES: *How to Win*

Friends and

Influence People: CD

At first, I was excited that the Dwarves had a new album out. Then I looked at the back cover of *How to Win Friends* and recognized the titles of about half of the songs. I played the CD and recognized almost all of the songs from previous Dwarves albums. All versions of the songs on this album are previously unreleased, but very few of them are drastically different from the original version. Some of the songs from their early albums are cleaned up a lot and recorded better, and I appreciate that, but everything else is pretty much the same. Still, I’ve been listening to this a lot lately. Fuck it. It’s the Dwarves, after all, and the Dwarves fucking rule. If it bothers you that most of the songs have been previously released in very similar versions, just think of this as a “greatest hits” album. Sure, some of their best songs are absent, but this does

have “Dairy Queen,” “Fuck ‘Em All,” “Dominator,” “Way Out,” and “Speed Demon.” Plus eleven more sick, twisted, rockin’ songs that make you want to sing along with crazy, evil lyrics like “I once had a girl in Phoenix by a railroad track. I left that girl in pieces in an Arizona shack.” (Or Skinny Dan’s favorite lyric: “I fucked a girl in Pittsburgh and the Steelers won that night.”) I can’t explain why I love the Dwarves’ music so much. I just do. —Sean (Reptilian)

ERASE ERRATA:

Other Animals: LP

This album destroys the fuck out of Sleater-Kinney anytime. Frantic female vocals with soul and power, backed by jerky punky danceable rock music. It caused me and my best friend Erin to insanely throw ourselves around her living room singing and dancing — and then getting attacked by her dog. If it lures one to dance to a mere record by themselves around the house, it must be good. Sexual and dirty, yet angelic and innocent at the same time. Just what I like. From San Francisco. Get this record and play it play it play it. I’m in love with Erase Errata. —Sarah Stierch (Troubleman Unlimited)

EXPLOITED:

Let’s Start a War: CD

I see that they’re still not giving Pushead any credit for his skull on the cover. Oh well. This is a re-release of the third album by the Exploited, at one time their most famous and, musically, most accomplished. There’s more of a metal feel here, which kinda hints at what was in store for this group just a few years later. As I remember, these guys had only one other good album in them, *Horror Epics*, before joining the Combat crew of reformed punks-turned-metal-heads and wallowing in obscurity for the better part of the ‘90s. According to a remarkably well-informed nazi prisoner who used to send me gay love letters when I wrote at another mag, Wattie is supposedly now some sort of leader in Blood and Honour, the neo-fascist boy-love club founded by the very dumb, very dead Ian Stuart. Wouldn’t be surprised if he is, considering that Wattie is the same guy who once compared Pakistanis in England with “Mexicans in your country.” Still love this stuff, though, despite the years that have gone by and the stupidity that has prevailed since. —Jimmy Alvarado (Captain Oi!)

F*OMB: *Self-titled*: CD

These musically caustic youngsters smoothly ebb and flow with a roar-

ing life-nurturing tide of experimental emotion-tinged post-punk playfulness raucously reminiscent of Husker Du, sonically similar to Wire, and aurally reflecting the soft side of life’s richly diverse whirl of individuality. Indeed, it’s also a musical car crash containing the mangled, blood-splattered remains of Smashing Pumpkins, Nirvana, and Pere Ubu. Sometimes as calm and cuddly as a whispered swirl of meandering sun-tangled springtime wind; other times as fitful, frenzied, and ferocious as a destructively wailing out-of-control hurricane. Yep, this tunefully titillating CD is an all-at-once powerful, uplifting, and ingratiating auditory experience. —Roger Moser, Jr. (Groundswell)

FACTION, THE:

Collection 1982-1985: CD

It’s the seminal skaterock band headed by Steve Caballero (he first played bass, then guitar), a legendary skater who’s best known by the population at large as the first skater to ever have a signature shoe back in 1989 (*The Half Cab*). The Faction always reminded me of ultra-early Suicidal Tendencies (not as fast and not quite as angry but completely devoid of metal), and JFA (mostly because all of the members of the band knew how to skate and celebrated the lifestyle). Still, this is a refreshing, complete collection of twenty-eight songs that have been kicking around on smaller labels for a bit and includes a couple of covers — “Your Generation” and “California Dreamin’ — and songs for several comps, most notably *Thrasher’s* super-influential *Skate Rock* tape (vol. 1) and LP (vol. 2). The Faction is a band that was more influential than most people realize. They’re the ones who came up with the song, (and subsequent graffiti) “Skate and Destroy.” Although it is kind of geeky-neat that they include a listing of every show played, including venue and other bands that they played with, would it kill them to print the lyrics? That’s not something you should have to email away for. Enough of my bitching. A very cool re-issue of an often overlooked band. —Todd (Beer City)

FLYS, THE: *Fly’s Own*: CD

Power pop that sounds like a cross between 999 and the Boomtown Rats. This album was the Flys’ second full-length, originally released on EMI in 1979. Power pop when power pop was vital. The music on this disc has aged somewhat, but that’s also what makes it interesting. Put it on, and you’re transported back to that time. There’s a dark

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air to the style, despite the pop rhythms and hooks. The keyboard gives it an urban feel as well. Overall, a good and consistent listen. "Fortunes" is a great song. —M. Avrg (Captain Oi!)

FLYS, THE: Waikiki Beach Refugees: CD

This is a re-release of this band's first album and although it's a damn fine album, the real gems to be found here are the singles cuts tacked on at the end as bonus cuts. Of particular note is "Love and a Molotov Cocktail," one of the best punk songs ever written, and "Can I Crash Here," which ain't far behind. Great, great stuff. —Jimmy Alvarado (Captain Oi!)

FRANK VIOLENCE AND HIS DEPUTIES:

Self-titled: 7"

Can't tell if "Faggot in the Family" is supposed to be belligerent or if Mr. Violence is one himself, but anyway this is one really dumb fun-time disc with three rockabilly punks and one slow Ramones styler. —Cuss Baxter (Violent)

FURIOUS IV:

...Is That You?: CD

This is a tough one to review. While I'm not too enthused by the professional, "rock" aspect of their sound, I am impressed by their conviction and how well it translates into their music. There's an intensity here that simmers just below the surface, which is something most bands in the pop punk cesspool sorely lack. I can see these guys going pretty far just by staying within the confines of that genre alone. Not exactly my bag of worms here, but I am mightily impressed. —Jimmy Alvarado (Pointed Finger)

GG ALLIN:

Violent Beatings: CD

Apparently this CD is the *Watch Me Kill* EP remastered with previously unavailable versions of songs from the *Suicide Sessions*. I'm no fan of GG. After hearing this, nothing has changed. The recording is terrible (remastered, my ass) and the songs aren't much better. If you are a fan, you might like this. Me, no. I don't like having shit thrown at me at a show, and I definitely don't want it coming out of my speakers. —Toby Tober (Acme)

GRANNIES, THE:

Self-titled: CD

At first glance of this CD, I was pretty weary. The Grannies was a pretty silly name and these guys were dressed in old woman garb

with masks and stuff. Very peculiar. But let me tell you, one listen and immediately I forgot the CD cover nonsense. These guys rock. Their sound reminds me of bands like The Mono Men and The Makers. It's straight forward rock'n'roll. The Grannies also have just a hint of a country influence without sounding anything like country. There are guest vocals by a female on a few tracks which really round out the band's sound very well. I have not stopped listening to this since I received it. Go grab yourself a flowery dress, an old lady mask and a raggedy cowboy hat with skulls on it and listen to this shit. —Toby Tober (Dead Teenager)

HEART ATTACK:

The Last War 1980-'84 CD

This is a pretty cool, affordable document of prototypical New York Hardcore before the term had completely jelled, became codified, and turned into rigid genre. What's pretty stunning is that guitarist and vocalist Jesse Malin (who went on to D Generation) and bassist Brendan Lewis are fucking twelve years old when the band started and the drummer is thirteen. It's almost impossible to tell. Their voices aren't all screechy like LA's Mad Society, nor were they as kitschy (Stephen Metz was a nine-year-old in a loincloth when Mad Society recorded their 45). It's extremely competent, earnest early hardcore, a couple notches below the high standard that Bad Brains and Minor Threat would aspire to and raise the bar on, but it's definitely nothing to scoff at. It's chronological (covering their demos and EPs), twenty-six songs in all, and it's apparent that the band learns how to play faster, add melody, and ultimately adjust tempos to keep from being stale. It's also definitely great to hear an authentic period piece. It's exactly how early punk used to sound. Far from sonically perfect, but the performances and faith in the hope that music could change the world makes that all but irrelevant. To up the archival nature of this recording, there are some weird, crusting hums and static right in the middle of a couple songs that I bet are the result of playing really crispy master tapes in order to digitize them. My only gripe is that there's no lyrics sheet, which is always a shame, especially for a band that's right on the cusp between being a seminal collector's find and crucial punk document. —Todd (Broken Rekkids)

JACK KILLED JILL:

Hello Neighbor: CD

JKJ ferociously roar like a musically-inclined lion whose butt's just

been pierced by a rocket-fuelled nuclear warhead. The bouncy, toe-curling songs furiously rock with all-out high-octane energy, yet possess a certain wild'n'giddy poppy edge to 'em that's endearing, entertaining, addictive, and attention-absorbing. The snotty growling she-monster vocals pack one helluva caustically cutting wallop that knocked my dick in the dirt faster than a flea shits, and the full-force raging instrumentation has "Punk Rock Approved and Affiliated" heartily stamped all over it. I've enthusiastically listened to this sonically sumptuous CD the entire evening, and all I wanna do now is loudly blast it a few more hours while relentlessly boomeranging my tattered'n'torn old body throughout the house in an inebriated tribute to the rip-roarin' musical splendor of Jack Killed Jill. They are indeed the ultimate in bad-ass tune-thrashers! —Roger Moser, Jr. (Geykido Comet)

JOHN BROWN:

BATTERY: Is Jinxed: CD

Yet another emocore band. If you dig the stuff, you'll be creaming your jeans over this. Me, I find dipping my finger in habanero chile and jamming it into my eye repeatedly to be less painful and loads more entertaining. —Jimmy Alvarado (Hewhocorruptsinc.)

KOSHER:

Self Control: CD

BYO compares them to the Replacements and Dillinger 4, but I wouldn't even go near those comparisons. Like much of what's coming out of that label lately (not counting Youth Brigade's output, which is, if possible, even better than their efforts "back in the day"), Kosher sounds like a second-tier opener for your average Epitaph band (pick one), which is to say as nicely as possible that they're a good band in theory, but so much of what they're doing sounds like a rehash of what so many other bands are already rehashing to death, all style, zero originality and zero substance. —Jimmy Alvarado (BYO)

LE TIGRE: Feminist

Sweepstakes: CD

It's the newest installation from the New York-based rollerskate jam girls. I know there has been this big buzz about how Le Tigre are so great, they're so ground breaking, etc... Well, they are dammit! The voice was turning into a whisper, ladies. Le Tigre brought back our growl. *Feminist Sweepstakes* is packed with a lot more beats. It's not as poppy (or as dance-y) as before, but it is more trance-y. It's

kinda got some eighties thump to it but still just as catchy. *Feminist Sweepstakes* is different, but more so in an evolution sort of way as opposed to a metamorphosis type of way. Rather than release a bunch of albums that sound the same, Le Tigre continue to speak their truth in word and sound however their feelings excite them to do so. What we get is a new sound and a special thrill to help keep our awareness, and our intentions up to par. —Harmonee (Mr. Lady)

LEAVING TRAINS:

Emotional Legs: CD

A mixed bag. When they stick to their originals, they are amazing. Some real top-notch punk tunes here, most notably, "Big Baby," "Capricious," and "Judy Don't Mind," although all have their merits. Sadly, these great songs are married to a great deal of filler, including unlisted instrumental outtakes and covers of songs by the Urinals ("Black Hole"), Eddie & the Subtitles ("American Society"), Black Sabbath (an abysmal cover of "Never Say Die") and Megadeath ("Killing for Jesus," which was done to greater effect by the Circle Jerks years ago), among others. This could've been a classic album. It's a damn shame they chose to sabotage the effort instead of coming up with just one or two more good tracks and then quitting while they were ahead. —Jimmy Alvarado (Steel Cage)

LIMP: Self-titled: CD

I was ready to hate this. But the geekiness inside of me overtook me. The songs have great pop hooks to them and make me want to jump on my chair and go-go dance for my wife to repulse her. The songs are mid-tempo but there is an energy to their music. It puts on a smile to this already old and jaded face. More and more I listen to this, I proclaim this a pop gem! The song "Atom Bomb" has an irresistible quality to it. It is a song I wish I would have written. Man, this band has written a great third release. Much improved and better than all of their previous output. —Donofthedead (Honest Don's)

LOST SOUNDS, THE:

Memphis Is Dead: CD

Some absolutely crazed music here. Take the intensity of a band like Le Shok, add a dash of goth, a smidge of hardcore and a veritable truckload of '60s trash and you still ain't even close, boyo. A nice example of how to take disparate influences, mush them all together and make something all your own. Great noise here, to be played LOUD and taken in conjunction

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MELT BANANA/ LOCUST: Split 7"

You know the goings on are gonna be weird with this pairing. Melt Banana — small and Japanese — plow out of the gate with two quickies: "Too Rough to Scoop" and "Creeps in a White Cake." It's a double dose of amphetamine-fast weirdness so well done, they've turned it into a profession. Somehow — and I've never been sure how — Melt Banana are able to meld psychedelia with hardcore. Creepy, yet snappy cool, like a baked-to-essence NoMeansNo. The Locust: although intimately familiar with them, my chin's be a-scratched furtively at the moment. 45 or 33? Methinks 33, because the vocals are less Chipmunk-ish. The Locust are able to meld two things that are rarely played in the same club, not to mention at the same time. Keyboard with hyper-speed scronch and splay (Think Joy Division meets a solo-less Cannibal Corpse, but nothing like that, really.) There's a ton of screaming, hilarious and long song titles ("The Half-Eaten Sausage Would Like to See You in His Office"), and lyrics that would be impossible to decipher if there wasn't a lyric sheet.

Five songs on the Locust's side, so you know it's good for the ADD in you. —Todd (GSL)

MERZBOW: *Dharma*: CD

You never know what you're going to get with a Merzbow release, which makes for an adventurous and always interesting listen. Sometimes it's solid harsh noise that assaults you, other times it's a mixture of sound that is layered and textured, sometimes serene, sometimes not. This latest outing is a mixture of both worlds. "Akashiman" is white noise with slight screeches and broken whistles. Underneath it is a pulsing and crunching warm tone and throughout it, he makes great use of the stereo effect. At times it's dizzying. "Piano Space for Marimo Kitty" is primarily a minimal piano loop with noise that playfully comes in, and at one point follows along to the plinking keys, rolling from channel to channel. Eventually the piano is obliterated in a wash of noise that turns to twisted trickling then ends with a manipulation of the piano loop. Track four, "Frozen Guitars and Sunloop / 7E 802" is the longest here. Clocking in at over 31:51:24. A variety of sounds are displayed from a droning industrial hum to a noise that sounds like the rush of air from a leaking valve.

It eventually fades to a cold steady rush of sound. —M. Avrg (Hydra Head)

MINOR DISTURBANCE:

Don't Tell Me What Is Right: CD

Well, the band name is staggeringly lame and the lyrics aren't exactly signs of hidden genius. The music, however, more than makes up for it all. These guys play some drivin' hardcore circa-1983 not unlike *Vicious Circle*-era Zero Boys without the pop. The lyric sheet's gonna get tossed, but this'll get some frequent plays for sure. —Jimmy Alvarado (Run and Hide)

MIRAH: *Cold Cold Water*: CDEP

I love Mirah. I cannot say enough good things about her. I have only had the pleasure of meeting her once, but I feel like I have had many conversations with her through the listening of her songs. Mirah has the most sincere honesty of any artist I have listened to. Her songs make me feel as though she's reading me the pages of her diary. I know exactly where she is singing from. This is an EP compiled of four songs and some excerpts from her upcoming album which I am assuming will be called *Cold Cold*

Water as well. This CD is western-themed. I never liked westerns up until now. The opening track (of the same title) sounds like a big epic western soundtrack complete with tumbleweed. Mirah's voice reels you in like a lasso and she captures her target every time. Her words give way to a seductive breath that could shatter your knee caps. This CD is another example of Mirah's alchemy with classic songwriting and the blood-stained emotions of a modern daygirl. As diverse as the world of music is, Mirah has sustained as well as expanded her unique and beautiful ability to compose and perform a really good song. I'm relying on her upcoming CD (as judged by the excerpts and my own previous listening experiences) to bring me along on another one of Mirah's epic adventures through girl-land supplied with special musical trinkets and sounds of all shapes and sizes. Highly recommended. —Harmonee (K)

MISERY:

The Early Years: CD

Glad to see this stuff available again. This disc collects their "Production Through Destruction" LP, their split LP with SDS, as well as the early 7's. I forgot how good this stuff was. Dark, metallic crust that covers the standard topics of



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war, capitalism, vivisection, etc., but delivered with the urgency of early Discharge. Seriously, this is some of the best crust you'll ever hear. —M. Avrg (Havoc)

MOVIOLA: *Rumors of the Faithful*: CD

From Columbus, OH, Moviola consists of four very talented young men. They all sing lead vocals at times, they all play every instrument. As my friend Jack says, "They call me a multi-instrumentalist." I'm in a genre-tossing mood right now, so I'll deem this in the alt. country pop area. Faux-hippies will totally dig it while yuppy Old 97's fans will get into it as well. It's catchy. The title track, "Rumors of the Faithful," brings distance into key — a topic I can totally relate when it comes to relationships. It makes me want to drive far, far distances to see the ones I want, and it better be a nice, warm fall day. You can pull bits and pieces from the Grateful Dead and The Band, but also pop purities of United States Three. Even a bit of their Ohio brothers Swearing At Motorists — in the raw recording of the drums (yet smooth as hell) and vocals. Marcy Mays of Scrawl, Mark Wyatt of the Great Plains, Greg Bonnell of the Naked Skinnies, and Barry Hensley all make contributions — whether through visual art or musical talents. A full and catchy (that's the keyword here) record with a pure wholesome feel. Yes. I said wholesome. —Sarah Stierch (Spirit of Orr)

MR. T EXPERIENCE: *And the Women Who Love Them*: CD

This record is a re-issue of MTX's previously recorded EPs, demos, B-sides, out-takes, and other odds and ends. Listening to it reminded me of two things: Dr. Frank is a total freak and my reasons for consistently including this band in my list of top five favorites ever are valid, good, and healthy. The record starts off with the seven songs from the EP ...And the Women Who Love Them, and also includes the EP Alternative is Here to Stay. I don't know if either of these EPs are out of print, but it's great having them together for the first time in one easy listening lump. Right around the time the original Women Who Love Them came out in 1994, MTX transformed itself from a stupid little band with quirky songs that were cute and vaguely amusing, to a semi-stupid, very together band producing beautifully crafted pop songs that managed to kick ass and be hysterically funny at the same time. My guess is it had equal parts

to do with the addition of bassist Joel, the staying power of Jim the drummer, and Dr. Frank's mastering of his chosen lyrical form: no one I know of can turn out a better punk rock rhyming couplet. He can also, I am reminded, be a razor-sharp social critic, fearless and quite capable of skewering the pretentious and band wagon-y elements of rock culture. In any case, this record showcases MTX at their very best. Worth noting are demo versions of "Sackcloth and Ashes" (from *Love Is Dead*) and "Another Yesterday" (from *Revenge Is Sweet and So Are You*), a cover of "Don't Go Breaking My Heart," a B-side duet with Kim from the Muffs, and a cover of Duran Duran's (!) "Is There Something I Should Know?" Then there is the "original version" of "Semi-OK," which rocks in any edition. Of course, in my not-so-humble opinion, the record is worth buying for one song alone: the infamous and lovely "Adjective" song. MTX's recording of the musical public service announcement that airs (aired?) during Saturday morning cartoons is total and complete joy — three minutes of unfettered bliss. The song was originally released on a Lookout/Kill Rock Stars comp that must surely be out-of-print. So snap it up chitlins, it doesn't get any better than this. —Sara (Lookout!)

NEGATIVE APPROACH: *Pressure*: LP

Are bootlegs good or bad? It all depends, really. If the music and the packaging is good, then it is good. Bad music and cheap packaging equals bad. This falls in the good category. You get at an affordable price the *Tied Down* LP on one side and live recordings on the other. I actually own the *Tied Down* LP which I bought for \$3.00 new in 1984. I did some creative price changing at the record store. I did not fall in love with that record at first. I don't think I listened to it again for ten years after I bought it. But when I listened to it again, I knew that I was crazy. The early '80s was my time as a young punker and all those emotions and energy came back to me. You must be thinking, old guy, he sucks! Partially you are right. I have that bias in me when it was my time. But new bands do excite me and that has kept me listening to punk all these years. What pushed me to purchase this was a request from a trading buddy. I figured, what the hell, I will get myself a copy, too. Worth the cash I paid for it. I'm not sure how much the *Tied Down* LP goes for nowadays, but it must be pretty damn expensive since it is Touch & Go #3. The live side is

pretty good as live recordings go. Recorded in DC and NY, it shows that their rage was not limited to the studio. I'm not sure if they ever made it out west. But if I did miss them, I was a stupid drunk fuck. One of the early pioneers of East Coast hardcore has a rebirth for another day in the sun. Limited to 1,000 though. —Donofthedead (Recollect X)

NEW END ORIGINAL: *Thriller*: CD

There's an unmistakable Blink 182 feel to the first track on this disc, which frankly I hesitate to say as this is better than Blink 182 as the band branches off into other (softer, acoustic, complex) directions on the rest of this disc, while Blink 182 mines the same rut in song after song; nevertheless, there it is. New End Original makes the annoying mistake (or affection) of putting the album title before band name, which is sort of disappointing as naming your album *Thriller* isn't nearly as funny or ironic as naming your band Thriller. The variety of influences here hasn't really coalesced into a "band" sound yet, nor do any of the particular songs really strike me as particularly worthy or repeat play, but still, there's something in the singer's voice that suggests something coming beyond the reach of what the band is capable of at the time of this recording — maybe not a great, great album, but at least one that would reward listening all the way through and invite you to put it on again sometime soon. Still, there are some niggling points that hang one up, preventing an unconditional recommendation... such as the need to point out that one too many songs named "Titanic" have been written already... plus the permeating tone of emo preciousness... and the fact that average person will never be able to remember this band's name is different from New Found Glory... and the art direction that deliberately places the song names at the end of the lyrics instead of before, placing the track timings where you'd expect to find the song titles, and... hmm, what's this? Oh no, stop the presses! I just discovered the drummer in this band used to be the drummer in Chamberlain, an insufferably awful band whose set I was subjected to a couple of times back when I was living in Indiana (where Chamberlain was from). It's good to see that tedious band wasn't totally useless, if their breakup eventually led to this band's formation; not that New End Original is amazing, by any means, but the variety and melodicism in the music here indicates fertile ground,

while Chamberlain was just a front-line of losers who posed like they were rock stars — their blatant, conformist grab at mainstream commerciality was distasteful at best and offensively condescending at worst. Ugh. Makes me nauseous just to think about it. I don't want to tar this band with the brush meant for Chamberlain, though, so best to try to forget about it... just try to forget.... —Aaron J. Poehler (Jade Tree)

NOBODYS:

Less Hits, More Tits: CD

Girls, alcohol, rock'n'roll and porno. Mix this in with fast, snotty three-chord punk and you have a favorable concoction. This is what The Nobodys have been doing since day one. This CD continues this fine tradition. Out of the twenty songs, some standouts are, "She Can't Say No (to Alcohol)," "Girls Wanna Talk (Guys Wanna Fuck)," and "(If You Don't Like AC/DC) You Ain't Into Rock'n'Roll." My only gripe about this CD is the misnomer applied to the title. Being the pervert I am, I got all ready to see some pictures of nice tits and found out there wasn't even one in there. There were pictures of girls with shirts on and if they didn't have one on, they were covering their pups with their hands. Not even one nipple! Whatkindacrap?! With that disappointment lurking over my head, all I could do was go to my bathroom and rummage through my pile of *Nugget* magazines for some satisfaction. —Toby Tober (Hopeless)

NOFX/RANCID: *split* CD

I'd never heard of either of these bands before, but something about this CD made me pull it out of the review pile and check it out. It's interesting. NOFX (pronounced "no effects," I guess) play angry socio-political songs, but come off like a Blink-182 knockoff with snottier vocals. Rancid play a bunch of goofy songs about drinking and sex. They even have one song about a Jewish gang called "The Brews." It's kind of funny, but as a whole, Rancid sound like they stole Operation Ivy's sound. Get your own sound, guys. Anyway, mark my words, both of these bands will be big someday. Of course, I'm just fucking around here. We all know who Rancid and NOFX are, and what they sound like. On this split, they cover each other's songs. It's easy to be cynical and dismiss this album as famous bands goofing off and making a lot of money off of it, but fuck that. NOFX and Rancid are really cool bands and they deserve the recognition they've gotten. This

split is interesting, too, because it allows you to hear the bands in a different way. NOFX show that they're actually really good musicians when they go beyond the funny songs about drinking and sex. Rancid-with-a-sense-of-humor is funny on several different levels, too. Kind of like Henry Rollins on Comedy Central, but much, much better. They add a new type of energy to NOFX's songs, and their cover of "Vanilla Sex" is awesome. -Sean (BYO)

PATSY:

In a Briefcase: CD

Any band that can pen a song from the perspective of a grizzly bear and call it "I Like to Eat," damn well deserves a listen. Or a hundred. I'll put it right out there for you; *In a Briefcase* is my favorite release of the year. Yeah, I know, the year's not even up, but I dare any other band to whip up a CD as fine as this. Patricia's guitar work is as beautiful as it is sinister; fingers effortlessly lilting and leading on her six string. The drumming, courtesy of Kerry, is sometimes sweeping and jazzy, while all of the time being powerful and precise. These elements, combined with the crushing strum of Marcie's hollow-bodied DeArmond guitar, (played through a bass amp no less,) paint a lush landscape of

magnificent color. And we haven't even gotten to the vocals yet! They're playful and inviting, yet sometimes breathy and spooky, balancing somewhere between a sultry crooner from the '40s, and a *Rid of Me*-era PJ Harvey. Patsy have been kicking around Los Angeles for about five years now. In that time they've released a 7", a four-song demo, toured the US in Patricia's blazin' blue Plymouth Fury, broke up, came to their senses, and finally got back together. Thank goodness, because if it weren't for the self-realization that they were meant to create music with each other, they might not have recorded this disc of delight. Songs like "Colostomy" and "Muddy Waters" (both of which have guest guitar work by Radio from The Need) are powerful and instantly catchy. Even mellower numbers like "Something Exciting" and "Motor & Maxine" have a unique and soothing quality about them — like that warm, fuzzy feeling you get right before you lay down to slumber and dream. Ah, but don't drift off just yet. To make certain you never forget your riot girl roots, Patsy wrap it all up with a raucous little ditty that screams and scowls; "I wanna sleep with my Sunday School teacher! Ee-yow! Uh-huh." The kids love that one. This adult loves 'em all. —Kat Jetson (Patsy)

PITCH BLACK: *Self-titled*: 7"

I heard someone compare these guys to TSOL. Hmm... I don't hear it that much. Pitch Black (featuring ex-members of Nerve Agents and Screw 32) are definitely on the dark side of punk, but they're not a retro-TSOL knock off. Take the modern era of punk with tightly wound rhythms and quick pacing, and put a sinister side to it. "No Leaders" is the chunkiest of the three, and the mid tempo cruise of "Half Empty" is my favorite. Comes in a great silk-screened package, limited to 300, so snap to it! —M.Avg (Cheetah's)

RED FLAG 77: *A Short Cut to a Better World*: CD

This is snotty "old school" punkrock fury that ought to inspire a snarling leather-clad legion of unruly spiky-haired insurgents to hit the streets in a fever-pitched fit of all-out pogo-bounce madness! On *A Short Cut to a Better World*, Red Flag 77 have ruthlessly resurrected the anarchic sonic viciousness of a bygone era when punk meant more than bein' fashionably acceptable in a stylish sheep-like world of suburban mall-generated clones. Indeed, this chaos-charged quartet of street-scruff rebelrousers aurally define the true attitude-dri-

ven spirit of punk with their frenetically uncontrolled display of colorfully discordant rage. It's as if The Clash, The Adicts, and The Cockney Rejects were all tossed into the middle of a violently boisterous pub brawl. Yep, the aggressive disruptive sounds of smashing bottles, breaking bones, and bloodied mangled bodies crashin' to the floor. Definitely my kinda lean, mean, and muscular musical madness! —Roger Moser, Jr. (Beer City)

REVILLOS, THE: *Totally Alive*: CD

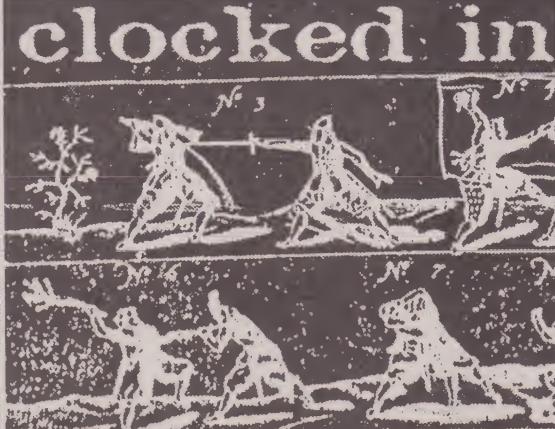
Thank you *Razorcake* for once again giving me a Revillos CD to review! Recorded in London in 1996, about fifteen years since the glory days of the Revillos, you'd kinda expect this to stink. Instead, this rocks and rolls every bit as much as did the Revillos in their prime! Silly clothes, great cartoon liner notes, and rocking girl and boy vocals! A complete live show! If you like rock and roll and like your music silly, a la the Dickies, you will love this! Guaranteed! Lots of Revillos songs and many Rezillos tunes, too! (The Rezillos changed their name to the Revillos after a few years.) If you haven't heard 'em before, I recommend getting the Rezillos CD first; but this is a most welcome addition to



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SATANIC SURFERS: *Fragments and Fractions*: CD

There is something about bands from Sweden, and other countries in general, that makes me always grab it. They seem to be better rehearsed and always mature enough to be putting out a release. Here is a band that falls into that melodic sound. But the things that strikes me about this band is that the song writing is always strong. The production is good and the music, though melodic, has power. It pulls me in, not away. They have a release on Epitaph titled *Nowhere Fast* that is just as good. If you can't find this since it is an import, get the latter. Plain and simple, kick ass, melodic punk rock. —Donofthedead (Burning Heart)

SETH PROJECT, THE: A *Rehearsal for the Great Uprising*: CD

100% serious, political, non-rhyming lyrics over flamenco guitar and drums, or over a chamber

orchestra, or over crappy turntablism, or, worst yet, over plain whistling. Truly fuckin' pretentious "look at me" bullshit with nothing going for it except one line: "18 million die from diarrhea attacks." Go, diarrhea, go! —Cuss Baxter (\$ETH!)

SIGN OFFS, THE: *Self-titled*: CD

Even though I really like the Heartbreakers and the Stooges, I've gotten wary of all the new bands trying to sound like them. When I saw this Sign Offs album and saw the press release that compared The Sign Offs to both the Heartbreakers and the Stooges, I was ready to dismiss them as the next in a long line of Johnny Thunders wannabes. Harmonie told me that I really needed to give this album a chance, though, so I checked it out, but I can't honestly say that I went into it with an open mind. Maybe it was the heavy Dead Boys influence or maybe it was the fact that the Sign Offs found a way to put a new spin on the Dead Boys, but I hung on to the album. I still told myself that I was wary of the trashy rock 'n' roll sound, but that didn't stop me from listening to this album a few more times. Then one day, I walked into Razorcake HQ and Todd was playing something that I recognized,

but couldn't place. I listened to a few songs, then asked Todd, "What are we listening to? It's really fucking good." "The Sign Offs," Todd said. Fuck. I couldn't have a closed mind about it anymore. And it's a good thing that The Sign Offs were able to crack through my thick skull, because now I can't stop listening to this album. —Sean (Disaster)

SKIT SYSTEM: *Enkel Resa Till Rannstenen*: LP

Full tilt Swedish hardcore that's a real white knuckler in the speed zone. Obliterates their earlier efforts, and that's quite a feat! I love the dirty sound of the bass, not to mention the crazed urgency in the vocals. Oh... so good! Lyrics are in Swedish, but there are explanations in English detailing their political intent. Crank it up and watch your windows shake! —M.Avg (Havoc)

SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS: *Beware of...*: CD

Beware, indeed. Egads, this is terrible! Hate to sound like an ageist, but this reminds me of fifty-year-old dudes tryin' to retain a piece of their youth by putting on ugly polyester suits and big gold medallions

and trying to pick up young girls at the local disco. It wouldn't be so embarrassing if there were any conviction in the music, but it's all swagger and no substance. Should've left well enough alone. Jesus, if I wanted to listen to really bad glam rock, I'd buy the Motley Crue box set or somethin'. —Jimmy Alvarado (TKO)

SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS: *Beware of*: CD

A brief bit of historically relevant rhetoric: Slaughter & The Dogs were born and bred outta the classic first wave of British punkrock madness and mayhem in the mid-1970s. They cut their teeth and developed their snarling bite while opening for those heathen-child Sex Pistols on a chaos-strewn, musically rambunctious tour of the UK in 1976. Their spectacularly seminal debut album, *Do It Dog Style*, is still an essential listen more than 20 years after its initial release. And their spirited 1977 single, "Where Have All The Boot Boys Gone," is as much a timeless classic as other better known limey sonic treasures like "God Save the Queen," "Neat Neat Neat," and "Clash City Rockers." Now fast-forward a couple of decades and then some: Slaughter & The Dogs are back with a vengeance as they enthusias-

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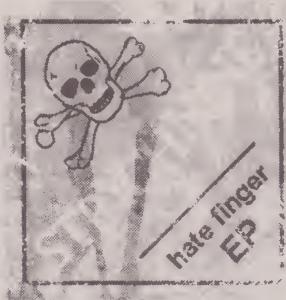
young and sexy — stand up for your mother CD • A lush five-piece featuring co-ed co-lead vocals, young and sexy might have you thinking of Guided by Voices, Fleetwood Mac, and the Carpenters, but maybe that's just us. The highly opinionated Robert Dayton of Canned Hamm says, "young and sexy are one of those musical groups on the cusp. They're ready to break out of their cocoon and become a big beautiful butterfly with their mellow folk pop sounds... and blushing mannerisms." Whatever! We just like the album! \$12ppd

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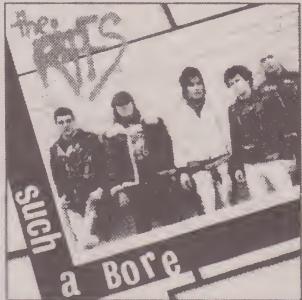
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ticly unleash this skull-thumper of a disc full of pub-punk rock-'n'roll fury with thickly structured chunks of melody-rich glam sassiness (in my brew-muddled lil' mind, I'm conjuring aural images of The Stooges and Neurotic Outsiders with riff-heavy Steve Jones-style guitar hooliganism, a thunderously booming topnotch rhythm section, and coherently pronounced vocals that recklessly veer from the eccentric theatrical savvy of David Bowie to Ian Astbury's manly cockrock growl to Lou Reed's brooding inner-city jive to a nasally congested Iggy Pop with a cockney accent). I shit myself not, this is a surprisingly stellar comeback and one helluva well-produced rock'n'roll release (and for you technologically advanced computer geeks out there, this CD contains a visually stunning video that can be easily downloaded for your jolly viewin' pleasure, provided ya possess the proper state-of-the-art electronic equipment, of course!). So I sayeth unto you: definitely give it a listen, kiddies; I promise it'll grow on ya like a vision-blurring bout of lager-induced drunken silliness. It's that damn tasty, satisfying, and downright addictive! —Roger Moser, Jr. (TKO)

SNOBS, THE: *School's Out, Let's Skate 7"*

This came as a recommendation from Bob Suren of Sound Idea. All you people out there should be ordering from him from time to time. Here is my PC quote of the day. Support those who put a lot of blood and sweat into the scene and also because he is a great guy! This thing just brings me back. A raw as fuck recording that would date them back to the early '80s, but this is a current band and recording. The bass reminded me of one of my early demos with its muddy thud. Oh, the memories. This three chord madness extreme takes the sheer joy of simplicity and expels it out with a acidic bite that burns holes in its path. I think that Bob used early period Gang Green as a reference to describe them. I can see that. Looking at the insert inside while listening got me confused on what speed it should be played at. They look so young. Regardless, this plays well at both speeds. —Donofthedead (My War)

SPLODGENESSABOUNDS: *Self-titled*: CD

Although best known for their compilation appearances (*Strength through Oi!, Oi! The Album*, etc., etc.) this, their first full-length LP, shows a far more interesting and

entertaining band. The opening track, "The Malcolm Opera," clocking in a lil' over 5:40 minutes, barely scratches the surface of what lies within. They're even capable of pulling off decent dub numbers ("Whimsy Zoom Zoom"), a genre they experimented with many times. But fret not, there's plenty of punk music to keep your mohawk from wilting. They've even thrown in "Two Pints of Lager..." and "Isabaleene (Part 2)" among the twelve other bonus tracks. At the base of it all is a silly attitude that leads to an unpredictable musical approach. An atypical slice of early punk. —M.Avg (Captain Oi!)

(much like the Ex, or Dog Faced Hermans — both bands who Submission Hold remind me of) with odd time signatures and various instruments (flute, violin, clarinet, etc.) coming in and out of the compositions, and they all seem to be connected to one another in tone and message (after all, politically everything is connected). The text running alongside the lyrics serves to help further the message, and add more depth. Part of the modular idea. I've listened to this quite a bit, and it's always a thought provoking play. Something I'm glad to have in my musical library. —M.Avg (Ebullition)

SUBMISSION HOLD: *Sackcloth and Ashes*: CD

Continually an interesting and progressing group. This is their best release yet, and this is an outfit that always delivers musical food for thought. I get the idea that everything Submission Hold involves themselves in is not casual or meaningless. This album is modular in the sense that there are separate but necessary pieces to make up the whole. Whether it's the artwork, or the subtitled "The Ostrich Dies on Monday" (and this is explained in the piece "Eulogy for an Ostrich" on the inside front cover). The songs are non-linear

THIS COMPUTER KILLS: *Self-titled*: CD

THIS COMPUTER KILLS: *This Life Is Lived 7"*

Initially, this reminded me of another computer-titled band, God Hates Computers. It's got those manic, frantic vocals that sound breathless but have an unlimited capacity to keep screaming. The instrumentation is frenetic, but not blurry. Crisp, real notes are being hit and complex, sharp melodies are being stretched like barbed wire around an immense amount of aural space. In the middle of it all is a dark, unsettling sense, like the smell of a hard drive crashing (of

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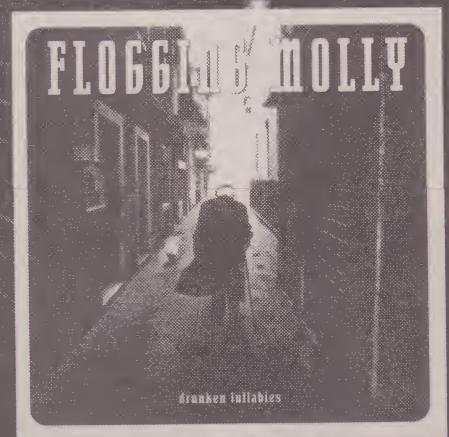
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digital memories instantly erasing), of the sense that all is not well with the world, that the ship of progress is both sinking and on fire, but songs must still be made. What's striking is how well crafted the both the entire album and "7" are (the "7" was recorded after the album, and progresses seamlessly). When This Computer Kills slows down and fills its lungs with air and smoke, there's a dark, shimmering, and often jangly quality to their songs. It's almost sinister without being overtly ooky spooky. All the songs work great by themselves and interlock in a tight bundle. I truly enjoy that quality in a band. Musical touchstones would be heavyweights and personal favorites like Tanner, Drive Like Jehu, The Hot Snakes, At the Drive-In, and The Trans Megetti—all bands that never forgot how to rock while stretching their audience's ears close to the pavement during a bumpy ride. Tough and never too arty for its own good. —Todd (CD: Substandard, "7": Sedition)

TOXIC REASONS:

Independence: CD

Originally released in 1982 on Risky Records, Beer City has unearthed this classic slice of (heavily UK influenced) hardcore punk for the digital age. The music

is tight with a blazing guitar and snarled vocals. The songs are well crafted, using varying tempos and tones to set the stage and create the energy necessary. They even go into reggae territory on "Ghost Town." My favorite cut from these guys is the Clash-influenced "White Noise." Never tire of hearing it. If you are to get anything from Toxic Reasons, then this is the one, because everything after was spotty. —M. Avrg (Beer City)

TUCKERTOWN: *Balance*

in a World of Chaos: CD

Punk rock that was sloppy and primal in ways you just don't hear often enough these days. In addition to having a little Iron Cross in 'em, I also hear a slowed down Violent Children in there somewhere as well. Great, crude stuff from a bunch of guys I hope never, ever learn how to play their instruments with any sort of proficiency. —Jimmy Alvarado (Inborn)

US BOMBS: *Lost in...*

America/Live 2001: CD

Seeing the US Bombs live is an awesome experience. Bombs frontman Duane Peters is a big reason for that because, even when he's not ten feet up on top of a stack of speakers and trying to ollie off the top speaker, even when he's not

creating a one-man circle pit and fucking up everything in sight, even when he's having an "off" night, he's never off. He dances like mad and always seems to be covered in a placental layer of sweat. It helps, too, that he's backed up by a great band. Guitarist Kerry Martinez is amazing, and even though he just stands there with his early-'70s NY punk pose (which is ironic, because he's one of the original early-'80s OC punks), it's impressive to see him play and just to watch his hands work. Chip's a powerful drummer, even more so when you can feel his drums pounding through the air of the club. And, really, the whole band is tight and fun to watch. It's fun to be a part of the show. So it makes sense that someone would want to release a live album of the Bombs. And this one has a bunch of my favorite US Bombs songs ("Die Alone," "War Birth," "The World," "Jaks," "Ballad of Sid"). In fact, I think the song listings were exactly the same as the set list the last time I saw the Bombs. So I like this album because it reminds me of a US Bombs show. Unfortunately, there's no way to capture the feel and energy of their live set. You just have to experience it in person. The sound quality on this is pretty crappy, too. —Sean (Disaster)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

Mad Monster Party: CD

MuSick Recordings have assembled some of the days finest surf and beat combos here, and it's delivered in "creep-o-phonic" sound! There's plenty here to have you crawling from the grave to shake your bones, too. For instance, The Space Cossacks with "Transylvanian Orbit." Clean and smooth with amazing production. Then you get treated to the otherworldly sounds of The Madeira and their frighteningly good take on the *Young Frankenstein* theme music. And it looks like my deal with the devil has paid off. Someone (The Chimps) has finally covered "It's the Mummy," which, as you may remember, was an absolute raver in the stop-motion movie classic *Mad Monster Party*. That alone makes this collection worth picking up. Other ghouls appearing here are The Boss Martians, Fifty Foot Combo, Tiki Tones, Satan's Pilgrims, The Woggles, Hypnomen, Los Straitjackets, and a few others. —M. Avrg (MuSick)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: *No Sleep for Hardcore*: CD

One thing you can always count on is the fact that Al Quint from *Suburban Voice* has great taste in music. *No Sleep for Hardcore*

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proves it. There's twenty-two songs here from some of the best hardcore bands around today: Tear It Up, Limp Wrist, Vitamin X, Esperanza, Pac-Men, and F-Minus. Dillinger Four even make an appearance on this comp with an unlikely DYS cover. It's fucking awesome. This is what the radio would sound like in a perfect world. Probably the coolest thing about this comp is that it only costs five bucks, and you get the latest issue of *Suburban Voice* with it. —Sean (Suburban Voice)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:
The Best of Sun Records Vol. I, Vol. 2 : 50th - Anniversary Edition: CDs, and *The Best of Sun Rockabilly 50th Anniversary Edition:* CD

To celebrate a half century of notable and influential aural offerings from the legendary Sun Records of Memphis-town, eight separate CDs have recently been released in reverent recognition of such an illustrious achievement and honorable milestone. Way back yonder ways in early 1952, Sam Phillips first flung open the doors of Sun Studio and began regularly recording the loud'n'lively sonic swagger of the restless jukejoint-carousin' locals, ragtag rhythm-and-blues boogie-blasters, and guitar-slingin', piano-pummellin' hillbilly hellcats. Mr. Phillips eagerly embraced the colorful eclectic sounds that raucously rolled outta the cotton fields, shanty towns, and honky-tonks in and around Memphis. He diligently and enthusiastically devoted a strenuous, mind-boggling amount of time and effort to forever preserve the unique auditory racket that was wildly oozing from the murky swirling mud-waters of the mighty Mississippi River during that era. It was a magnificent new sound that was all-at-once raw, primitive, individualistic, and distinctly original; a moving, jaw-crackin' mixture of country, blues, gospel, and rural old-time folk music. Soon to be called rock'n'roll, it would unleash an almighty roaring wallop that would ultimately alter the entire music world indelibly. And Sam Phillips unknowingly possessed an innate ability to perfectly capture this new generation of noise as it happened. So here they are as they were, the inimitable bad-ass granddaddies of rock'n'roll: Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Roy Orbison, Charlie Rich, Billy Lee Riley, and Conway Twitty (when he used his birth-given name, Harold Jenkins), plus

lesser known, but equally prolific, rockin' cool-cats like Bill Justiss, Carl Mann, Ray Smith, Sonny Burgess, Little Junior's Blue Flames, Sleepy LaBeef, Warren Smith, and Carl McVoy. My only certifiable complaint is the obvious omission of stellar inspirational tracks by Jackie Brenston with Ike Turner (their "Rocket 88" is the definitive and first recorded release to ever be categorized as rock'n'roll), Rufus Thomas (his "Bear Cat" and "Walkin' the Dog" are the ultimate skull-rattlin' R&B classics!), and, of course, Elvis "The Thrustin' Pelvis" Presley (his rough-and-rowdy Sun output aurally epitomizes the frenzied energetic exuberance of rock'n'roll's early explosive outbursts). Anyway, I'm sure the noticeable exclusion of the aforementioned musical geniuses has a lot to do with the usual tangled web of licensing legalities more than anything else. Damn, I just wish the pencil-pushin' suit-and-tie corporate types could set aside their differences for once and keep their shady conflicts-of-interest business dealings the hell outta rock'n'roll! With that so firmly stated and out of the way, I religiously recommend these three discs (as well as the other five companion pieces: *The Best of Sun Country*, *Johnny Cash*, *Carl Perkins*, *Jerry Lee Lewis*, and *Roy Orbison*). Each CD is an incredibly affordable bargain at six-to-seven bucks a pop! Sure as shit, Sun Records is where it all began. Rock'n'roll was born, bred, and ultimately shaped there some fifty whirlwind years ago. Yep, kiddies, it's way past high-time to pay your respects where they are damn well due. —Roger Moser, Jr. (Direct Source Special Products Inc.)

VIRGIN MEGA WHORE:
Self-titled: 7"

They're from Chicago, but I can see why they're on a San Diego label, what with the postmodern collision of the post-prepunk skrang of Pussy Galore and the post-post-postpunk floomp of Men's Recovery Project. Loud guitars fill the spaces between electronic piano blurs and samples and yelling and stuff. Nasty sex packaging and colored vinyl rounds out a splendid unit. —Cuss Baxter (Youth Attack)

VIRULENT STRAIN:
Torture Tools: CD

When I hear the Virulent Strain singer scream and shred her vocal chords, yet still stay in key (mostly) and actually have some range, it's hard for me to not think of the Distillers. But the more I listen to this album, I further I get from that

comparison. For one thing, Virulent Strain have a more hardcore sound than the Distillers. Also, where the singer for the Distillers will sometimes slow the songs down so she can hit a bad-eighties-metal-sounding scream, the singer for Virulent Strain will speed the song up so she can rip through some fast-as-hell, intelligent lyrics. Virulent Strain's songs are full of hooks but still charge with a lot of power and no nonsense. They're on to something new and really cool here. I highly recommend this album. —Sean (Rodent Popsicle)

VIVA MAXITONE:

Taking Up Serpents: CD

This is blazing balls-out rock'n'roll madness that's more thunderously ferocious than a fully revved '57 Chevy tanked and topped-off with high-octane rubber-burnin' rocket fuel! It's the blistering, assaulting sound of volcanic guitar-crunchin' fury (with a bit of East Bay Ray-style siren-wail guitar leads), ominously loud bone-rattlin' bass-thumpin' bravado, an unruly array of drum-pummeling nuclear explosions that'd deafen the dead, and lasciviously snarling vocals nastily drippin' with snotty bitch-with-balls attitude. Viva Maxitone are raucously comparable to a livelier more crazed X, an angrier more

abrasive Joan Jett, early Hole with much more of a lethal mean streak of rock'n'roll originality, L7 drenched in a flaming vat of dragster fuel and bootleg whiskey, a bouncier more bad-ass Breeders, and The Paper Tulips if they had been born, bred, and branded in Texas. Whooooo-doggy shit yes, this flesh-mangling CD vigorously boils the blood, relentlessly scorches the skin straight down to the bone, and mercilessly melts the ears into a wax-ritten pile of mush. Not even the first atomic bomb unleashed this much combustible power; nor did Muhammad Ali ever pack this fierce of a jaw-crackin' punch; and Godzilla could never begin to roar with such unbridled raging passion as that which is so uniquely contained herein. My ears have just witnessed the wrathful spine-snappin' future of rock'n'roll, and it's Viva Maxitone! —Roger Moser, Jr. (Idol)



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- **Bad Afro**; <www.badafro.dk>
- **Bad Taste (US)**, 3953 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis, IN 46205
- **Bad Taste (Sweden)**, St. Sodergaten 38, 222 23 Lund, Sweden
- **Beatville**, PO Box 42462, Washington, DC 20015; <www.beatville.com>
- **Beer City**, PO Box 26035, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0035; <www.beercity.com>
- **Bert Dax Cavalcade of Stars**, PO Box 39012, St. Louis MO 63139; <Bertdax@hotmail.com>
- **Big Neck**, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195; <Bigneckrecords@usa.net>
- **Big Wheel Recreation**, 325 Huntington Ave. #24, Boston, MA 02115
- **Black Butcher**, Bergfeldstr. 3, D-34289 Zierenberg, Germany
- **Blastmat**, PO Box 380152, East Hartford, CT 06138-0152
- **Blue Flames, The**; <www.theblueflames.com>
- **BMG**, which means it's available at the record store in the mall, next door to Hot Topic.
- **Bomp**, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510; <www.bomp.com>
- **Boss Tuneage**, PO Box 19550, London, SW11 1FG, UK; <www.bosst.freereserve.co.uk>
- **Bratville**, PO Box 1012, 2305 Hamar, Norway; <www.bratville.com>
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- **Captain Oi!**, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA, England; <www.captainoi.com>
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- **Chunksah**, PO Box 974, New Brunswick, NJ 08903; <www.chunksah.com>
- **Coldfront**, PO Box 8345, Berkeley, CA 94707; <www.coldfrontrecords.com>
- **Combat Rock**, 7 Rue Du Paquis, 57950 Montigny Les Metz, France
- **Cyclone**; <www.cyclonerecords.com>
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- **Hydra Head**, PO Box 990248, Boston, MA 02199; <www.hydrahead.com>
- **Idol**, PO Box 720043, Dallas, TX 75372; <www.idol-records.com>
- **Inborn**; <www.inbornproductions.com>
- **Insurgence**, 2 Bloor St. W., Suite 100-184, Toronto, Ontario M4W 3E2, Canada; <www.insurgence.net>
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- **Konkurrent**, PO Box 14598, 1001 LB Amsterdam, NL
- **Life Is Abuse**, PO Box 20524, Oakland, CA 94620
- **Lookout**, PO Box 11374, Berkeley, CA 94712
- **Mad Butcher**, Bergfeldstr. 3, D-34289, Zierenberg; <www.madbutcher.de>
- **Manifesto**; <www.manifesto.com>
- **Mercury Four, The**; <www.mercuryfour.com>
- **Merge**, PO Box 1235, Chapel Hill, NC 27514
- **Monotone Management**, PO Box 486, Allston, MA 02134
- **Moodswing**, 3833 Roswell Rd., Suite 104, Atlanta GA 30342; <www.moodswingrecords.com>
- **Morphius**, PO Box 13474, Baltimore MD 21203; <www.morphius.com>
- **Mother West**, 132 W. 26th Street, NY, NY 10001
- **Mr. Lady**, PO Box 3189, Durham, NC 27715; <www.mrlady.com>
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- **Twitch**, 2207 Elliot Drive, Nashville, TN 37138
- **Unity Squad**, PO Box 1235, Huntington Beach, CA 92647
- **Vicious Kitten**, GPO Box 20, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia; <www.viciouskitten.com.au>
- **Victory**, 346 N. Justine St., Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607
- **Vile Beat**, PO Box 42462, WDC, 20015; <www.beatville.com>
- **Violent**; <www.moisst.com>
- **Wayward** (No address listed. Way to go, schmucko)
- **Youth Attack**, PO Box 126321, San Diego, CA 92112



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ANTIPATHY #7, \$2 ppd.,
5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 200 pgs.

I've wanted to read this zine for a long time now. Appears I should have acted quicker. This is a great zine! Punk rock without the music coverage. Boiled down to politics and personal issues. The writing is great, and I've been reading everything as it comes up in the pages (I'm still not finished reading this yet!). Mike's views on anarchism and radical groups are pretty right on, and realistic. My only hope is he doesn't allow his cynicism to get the best of him. He talks about how he's sick of rich kids going on and on about privilege (here! here!), the environment, abuse, train hopping, and more. Seriously, there's a little bit of everything in here. It's nice to be inspired from a zine again! I hope to see another one of these soon. -M.Avg (Mike Antipathy, PO Box 11703, Eugene, OR 97440; <antipathy@morelos.com>)

BARRACUDA #12, \$3.50, 8 x 10 1/2, glossy cover, newsprint with full-color signatures, 40 pgs. What's stealthy about *Barracuda* is that it pulls off being very, very stylish without being pretentious, doing it all on a budget, and encouraging the reader to do the same. I have the unfair advantage of knowing Jeff Fox, who runs the magazine, and I just happen to know how smartly he runs his operation. It's completely DIY, done for all the right reasons, and to top it all off, the articles are excellent, executed with a pure enthusiasm and insight that's lacking in a large swath of zines. I always find myself reading each and every article, and I learn something new every time. Did you know that Benjamin Franklin used electricity to slaughter animals and he owned the first bathtub in America? Name the first national highway? Route 66? Nope. The Lincoln Highway. There are also articles on understanding credit when purchasing a car and the Tiki of the Marquesas. Oh shit, I forgot the most obvious thing — there's beautiful pin up girls throughout, tastefully posed, hilariously written up. I always look forward to *Barracuda* and it hasn't disappointed yet. -Todd (Barracuda, PO Box 291873, LA, CA 90029)

BEAN SODA, #1, \$2 ppd., 8 1/2 x 11, newsprint, 32 pgs.

This is the premier issue of an interesting newsprint fanzine. This issue has one guy's "resignation to punk rock" (though he's really resigning from punk rock, not resigning himself to it), a story about a young woman making her first big post-college move, an interview with Trans Am, an interview with a woman who has an independent art

space in DC, music, movie, and zine reviews, and a lot more stuff. They've done pretty well here with their first issue. It's certainly ambitious. Keep an eye out for this one in the future. —Sean (Bean Soda, 4835 N. 22nd Rd., Arlington, VA 22207)

THE BENJONES COLLECTION, #1-7, \$5 for 7 zines, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, several pages.

I was lucky enough to pick up all of benjones's zines when I was in San Francisco last December, and I was completely hooked. It was one of those situations where you get a zine, then you know that you have to get all the zines in the collection. Luckily, benjones had given me the whole collection. I still want more. Anyway, the first two zines in *The benjones Collection* are called "Answer the Beep." A few years ago, benjones asked everyone who left a message on his answering machine to leave the message in the form of a poem. He supplied the theme. Then, he transcribed the poems and released them in two issues of this zine. The poems are pretty interesting and usually funny, but what's coolest about them is the way you can see people develop a style through repeat messages. Some of benjones's friends are clearly only calling him so that they can write a poem, other friends hate the answering machine project, and compose several angry poems about how much they hate composing poems for answering machines. It's a pretty cool experiment, and it turned out way better than anyone would expect it to. The other five zines in *The benjones Collection* are "The Death Weasel" comics. The Death Weasel is a superhero who fights crime (of course) part time and battles "the little weasel of self abuse" (a physical manifestation of his self depreciation, not a masturbation joke) full time. It creates a pretty complex character. Through five issues, you see the Death Weasel grow and develop, sink into debilitating depression, rise out of it, fall in love, transform into the main character of a comic strip, and return to old comic format in time to investigate ethereal realms. No, this isn't your ordinary comic, but it's pretty fucking awesome. Rumor has it that The Death Weasel comic may resurface pretty soon. I'm excited about that. For the time being, though, those of you who've never read the comic can get your fix with *The benjones Collection*. —Sean (benjones, 700 Calhoun St. #203, Albany, CA 94706)

CHICKENHED ROLL AND ZINE #3, \$2, 7 x 8 1/2, copied, 44 pgs. Josh has an excellent ability to tell

stories and a sense of humor which makes his zine work very well. A large part of this issue is his tale of woe from about quitting smoking and how he felt like a hypocrite for putting it off so long. From thinking that he had a sinus infection to finding out that he has asthmatic bronchitis, he talks about the new "crazy" things he does after quitting smoking like feeling strong all the time and riding his new bike (after giving it an appropriate make over). He also talks about his dad coming to terms with the fact that he is gay and his dad explaining it to him on his twenty-first birthday (a great, heartwarming story). Also included is the story of his crackhead neighbor, which makes for some interesting reading. Overall, this zine is great for entertainment value. I read it front to back in one sitting and this is a pretty large issue. —Joe (The Josher, PO Box 330, Richmond, VA 23218)

COLDBRINGER, #1 and #2, free, 8 1/2 x 7, photocopied, 32 pgs.

Its heart is definitely in the right place, attempting to be more than merely just about music, *Coldbringer* comes across as a heart-felt antidote to ad-driven monthlies like *Skratch*. As is the case with any burgeoning collective, it's trying to find its editorial footing. The short stories, poems, columns, and record reviews vary greatly in quality, depending directly on the author. I get the overwhelming sense that a majority of the contributors are in school. Not a good or bad thing by itself, but real obvious when a science fiction piece, "After the War: Part 1," talks about a post-apocalyptic world and one of the first things that is mentioned isn't something like food or the radiation-activated foot growing out of their head, but funding by an academy and how they got their computers; it's about as fun as hearing a grant-making lecture in monotone. However, *Coldbringer*'s strengths lie not solely in its convictions, but also in the record review section and its main do-gooder, Andy Kindon. Andy's a guy you really should listen to if you want a great bead on up-and-coming hardcore. He's got a great ear, picks fantastic music, is a fair-minded reviewer, and is enthusiastic without being a dummy about it. All said and done, I look forward to future issues. —Todd (Coldbringer, PO Box 931174, LA, CA 90093; <www.liquid2k.com/coldbringer_collective>)

DEATH OF A PSYCHE #16, \$1/trade, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 48 pgs. Liz is a smart cookie and it shows in her zine. She starts off by discussing some local kids who justify

one of their friends raping a girl because she is a "slut" and easily segues into talking about her grandparents and then to talking about rights of sex workers and self defense. The articles work well together, and the zine is very cohesive even though the topics don't seem like they would be. The recurring theme in her zine is always sex and her thoughts on it; emotional and political and how they interperse with each other. —Joe (Liz, 4839 E Crocus Dr., Scottsdale, AZ 85254)

F.T.W., #4 and #5, \$2, 5 1/2 x 7, copied, 46 pgs.

Absurd and often funny, *F.T.W.* lionizes how fucking cool the author is (and he is pretty cool). Movie reviews are done by a piss-happy dwarf, the fashion tip of the next season is nudity with huge genitalia, and the longest essay is about making the world's largest hamburger and giving the world's second largest hamburger to a grateful bum. There are repeated mentions of hitting people he hates in the balls. While sometimes confusing and a little self absorbed to fully understand what's going on, overall it's a belligerent, entertaining, and unapologetic read. Bonus points go to the unabashed hatred of Dashboard Confessional. Fuck that guy. —Todd (FTW, 7095 Hollywood Blvd. #1257, Hollywood, CA 90028-8903)

GO METRIC, #14, \$2 USA, \$3 Intl., 216 x 177, copied, 60 pgs. Metrics rock, and so does *Go Metric*. Rocks, that is, in the arena of powerpop and the like; the arena where Kurt Block from the Fastbacks gets interviewed wholly on the subject of Queen and the Figgs get interviewed by Ms. Tight Pants. Among goofy features you'll also find chats with the Decibels, Big Dipper, and Moo La La Records' Scott Soriano, as well as numerous references to Cheap Trick and the Knack. Kickin'. —Cuss Baxter (2780 Ryewood Ave. - Apt F, Copley, OH 44321)

HEAD IN A MILKBOTTLE, Vol. 2, #2, \$3.50 ppd., 8 1/2 x 11, offset, 46 pgs.

Garage punk sort of zine. Cover story is The Cripplers, followed by interviews from The Zodiac Killers, The Screamin' Mee Mees, The Honkeys, and the most interesting Q & As come from the filmmakers, Eric Stanze, and J. Michael McCarthy. There's also reviews, and the editor's "essential shit list." —M. Avrg (PO Box 15125, St. Louis, MO 63110)

INTERNATIONAL PLAYBOY #3, \$1 ppd., 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied 18 pgs.

Evil Bob Thompson is a cynic in the purest sense. He calls bullshit on so many things that I tend to enjoy — leftism, anarchism, punk rock — that you'd think I'd hate him. But the opposite is true. Bob injects a well-needed, often caustic counterpoint to many of the herding tendencies in the underground and offers some ideas to chew on (like why it's nice to live in at the end of a gauntlet of police houses, playing bluegrass). What I won't discount is that Bob's a thinker and has the ability to see the complexity of issues — the intricacies of capitalism are tackled quite nicely in this issue — before taking his pot shots, which is refreshing. Plus, he always comes up with a couple of interesting nuggets. I had no idea that Mark Noah of the Anti-Heros is a pilot. If you want to read some competent, non-knee jerk reactions against anarchism, give Bob a try. —Todd (International Playboy c/o Bob Thompson, 3596 Pine St., North Bend, OR 97459)

NO ONE TOUCHES THE DREAM TEAM #6, \$1/stamps, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 44 pgs.

Chris writes what one would identify as a "humor" zine (if there is such a thing, this is it). There's a big article on bringing back that old clothing line "No Fear" with new slogans (in poor taste). Chris reviews bands' stickers and packages that he receives. This is the best feature of the zine as Chris talks about the aesthetics and dynamic of each sticker which is generally enough for you to lose your composure laughing. Other funny features like how Snapple's decline in gas station coolers is a plot against him. Point: old school rules, Counterpoint: I'm white trash. You get the picture. —Joe (Chris, PO Box 19561, Boulder, CO 80308-2561)

OPINIONS, free/trade, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 8 pgs.

Opinions is eight pages of rants by a guy who clearly spends more time ranting than he does thinking. He tries to be witty as he makes fun of working class pride, prisoners, SST records, patriots with foreign cars, and basically everyone in the punk scene except for him, but he's not witty. He's kind of a numbskull. Just to give an example, he rails on people who use drugs because, "America people just disappear because they are against the drug cartels some tortured, some killed, some you just don't see again, gee that sucks, but a line of coke is more important than human rights... right?" Even if this guy learned how to write a sentence, his opinions wouldn't seem any more intelligent. —Sean (Karl Kangieser,

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PUNKANUT, #2, \$2 ppd., 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 64 pgs.

Punkanut reads more like a novella than a zine. In this issue, author Wylie Lenz tells his story about going to Active Resistance '98, then striking off from Toronto on random travels across Canada and through the Midwest. Lenz is an interesting guy because, on one hand, he's a very orderly and structured guy — he even criticizes his own "obsessive-compulsive tendencies." On the other hand, he's the kind of guy who will take off on a train-hopping or hitchhiking adventure on a whim. His writing style reflects this duality. He reminds me of Jack London or very early Steinbeck in the sense that, like London and early Steinbeck, Lenz's tone is very formal — "inquiring" instead of "asking," "purchasing" instead of "buying," that kind of thing — but his subject matter is strongly free-thinking and anti-authoritarian. He's also a deep thinker and he communicates these thoughts articulately. At the core of this zine is basically the story of one young man's struggle against contemporary society and his confusion about where his next step through non-conformity will take

him. It's something that I can fundamentally relate to. I really enjoyed this zine. —Sean (Wylie, PO Box 540304, Houston, TX 77254)

PUNK ZINE, #12, \$1, 8 1/2 x 5 1/2, copied, 32 pgs.

Man, is this crappy. #4 thing he hates: fake punk. #5 thing he hates: the Ramones. A picture of a Mexican wrestler with the caption "Smash the State." A swastika with a line through it and the caption "Fight Facism!" (sic). Cartoons of schools burning and cops getting plugged. He thinks there's no punk scene in Minneapolis and goes emo over the girl who probably dumped him because he's such a dink (#6 thing he hates: fat girls). While I'm intrigued by his challenge to Ben Weasel to suck his dick over whether the Ramones are lame or not, I'll still say: worst zine ever. —Cuss Baxter (James, 1609 Marshall Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104)

RAZORCAKE #7, \$3 ppd., 8 1/2 x 11, newsprint, glossy cover, 100 pgs.

Great. Just what the world needs: another fucking newsprint "punk rock" fanzine. Guess no one told these guys that punk is dead. I have no idea why they sent this to us to review, but here

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goes. First off, you have an article about the Hitler/ Ford connection. Way to stay on top of current affairs, guys. Hitler's bad; multinational corporations suck. That's a news flash. What's your next column gonna be about? Napoleon's short-guy complex. Then there's the article on independent book publishing where the author rags books that are published by major publishing houses, yet starts the article off with a quote from George Carlin's book, which was published by a major publishing house. If independent books are so great, you'd think he at least could've found an independently published book to quote from. To make matters worse, the author is an independent book publisher himself. Can you say incestuous? What are they gonna do next, have an article on an independent radio station written by a former DJ from that station? Yep. It's in there. And what else can I find to rag about this rag? Let's see. More in the late-breaking-news category, there's an interview with the Adolescents — a band that put out one album, and that was twenty years ago. That's a finger on the pulse of the underground for you. There's a column about a baseball game from 1968. Now there's a recent event. I bet the author of that column wasn't even fucking born in 1968. Let's see, what else? In the zine review section, they review two zines put out by their own contributors. And here's a big surprise: they like them. Did I already ask if you could say incestuous? The most appropriate thing in this sorry excuse for a magazine is the comic about a superhero who has a guy living in his ass, which is kind of like the editors of this magazine, who apparently live with their heads up their asses. So, anyway, this zine is highly recommended. —Sean (Razorcake, PO Box 42129, LA, CA 90042)

RESIST #42, \$1, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 60 pgs.

Matte is always struggling to pack each issue with more and more information. He does pretty well this time around comprehensively covering organic gardening, composting, Wal-Mart's economic destruction of American small towns, how to make dandelion wine, building a cart-bike out of an old shopping cart, the work that his wife does as a mother and caretaker of the family, how to conserve money, dumpster diving at your favorite stores, keeping warm on your bike in the winter, May Day (the true Labor Day) stories and how punk is a ghetto, and more along with some obligatory zine, book, and record reviews. *Resist* is always a sort of condensed version

of all of the books that Matte has just finished reading and it works well this way. I feel like I learn a few things after reading every issue and this one is no exception. Great cover artwork. —Joe (Bicycle Lane Industries, PO Box 582345, Minneapolis, MN 55458)

REV. RICH MACKIN'S BOOK OF LETTERS #15, \$3 ppd., 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 48 pgs.

Granted, Mr. Mackin is a *Razorcake* columnist, and I am being paid off with huge bags of Sour Patch Kids to write a good review of his zine, but still... it's pretty great! For those not in The Know, Rich Mackin writes silly letters to corporations and prints both his letters and the replies. He also has a book out, and does speaking tours every once in awhile. (I refuse to use the phrase "spoken word" — one of the most annoying phrases I have ever heard. Spoken word = speaking. Got it? Okay.) Anyway, a lot of this stuff is quite funny. Haikus about Gillette razors, Starbucks, the Gap, and more. Letters addressing important questions like "What exactly are the 2000 parts my family needs to wash with Lever soap?" and "Why does my junk mail address me as a woman?" And some more political letters as well. Well worth your two bucks — and buy the book to read about Mr. Mackin's stalking of the Lever 2000 company. Hilarious! —Maddy (Rich Mackin, PO Box 890, Allston, MA 02134)

SHREDDING PAPER #12, \$3.95, 8 x 10 3/4, full color cover, heavy stock, 100 pgs.

Shredding Paper is essentially a music review magazine, and this issue has excerpts from books and articles delineating the links between Osama bin Laden and George Bush, which was pretty cool. Let me retool that first sentence a tad. *Shredding Paper* is an essential record review magazine. Every day when I wake up and brush my teeth and look in the mirror, against my best intentions, it's happening. I'm turning into a full-fledged record geek. Not only does *Shredding Paper* review over five hundred pieces of music in this issue to satiate my ever-burgeoning desire to hear more and more music, they do it well. Define "well," Todd. I happen to agree with them 80% of the time, 10% of the time I have no reference point, and the other 10% they seem to have good reason for disagreeing with me, and that's a rare thing indeed. Very few magazines come across as essential record buying guides. *Shredding Paper* is one of them. Looking for something new, musically? This is a wonderful

place to start. —Todd (Shredding Paper, PO Box 2271, San Rafael, CA 94912)

SORE, #13, \$2 ppd., 8 1/2 x 11, newsprint, 40 pgs.

This is a newsprint fanzine with music, zine, and book reviews, plus a bunch of short stories. I really like the concept of this zine, and it's kind of cool to read short fiction by DIY kids. The quality of the stories vary here. A couple of them aren't too well-written, but most of the stories range from okay to pretty good. The real stand out here is an excellent story about a guy's love affair with a girl who lives in a trailer park. To say any more about the story would give away too much (the story's only a page long), but it's definitely a good read. The rest of this zine is worth checking out, too. —Sean (Sore Zine, c/o Taylor Ball, PO Box 68711, Virginia Beach, VA 23471)

SUBURBAN VOICE #45, \$4, 8 1/4 x 10 1/2, glossy cover, newsprint, lots of pages, comes with CD.

Al Quint's got it going on. Not only does he have the perspective of almost twenty years of being in the thick of music (without becoming a twat, totally jaded, or an industry fuckball) — so he knows what he's talking about — he's got an irrefutable enthusiasm that has me champing at the bit to check out a slew of new or previously overlooked bands coming through town or hiding in the record bins. I'll even go so far as to say that Al Quint writes the best live reviews in the business. Bless him. If you're even remotely interested in hardcore and punk and want to be immersed in a zine for the better part of a week full of reading, *Suburban Voice* is more valuable than an ass patch is to a crusty punk. In this issue, interviews with Crispus Attucks, Deathreat, Rip It Up, The Gaza Strippers, Life's Halt, Unseen, Last in Line, and Ebro. It's packed to the gills and worth every penny. I'd happily pay twice as much. Best case scenario for a punk music mag. —Todd (Suburban Voice, PO Box 01903-2746)

THIS PLACE SUCKS #9, \$1, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 44 pgs.

The following paragraph completely sums up this zine: "I have been using the same bottle of shampoo for over 2 years. Pert plus (proctor and gamble). Does shampoo mold or expire? I would like to know. 2 years ago when I told my previous barber that I used Pert Plus, she said that I can also use it to mop my floor. Interesting, I thought. So I tried it, and she was completely right, although the floors were

especially slippery. So slippery in fact that it made my mother slip and brake her tale bone. My barber and I had a good laugh over that one." Not for grammar buffs. —Joe (Brandt Schmitz, 513 NW 19th St, Corvallis, OR 97330)

TIGHT PANTS #9, 3 stamps (but send an extra \$1,000 if you're Ross Perot), 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, copied, 66 pgs.

If you're one of those folks who's always raising your hand first in class, yeah, you got me. Maddy writes for *Razorcake*. Wanna know how that high-level, clandestine operation worked? She sent us back issues of *Tight Pants*. Sean and I read them. We laughed so hard I had to stop reading her during breakfast because I'd keep on charging milk out though my nose. (Mucous bubbles and all.) She always reviews bands in comparison to cereal and that section of the zine is never stapled in so it can be tossed out. Genius. We asked her to write for us. Easy as pie. Maddy's got the perfect balance of wit and smarts. Not only does she mock corporate culture with the best of them, she's not subsidized by some invisible money tit. So, you get two things that don't usually interlock — first-hand experience about temporary shit jobs, (the inside info on the hiring process at The Limited is invaluable) and you get an everkeener sense of humor, heavily dosed with punk rock referencing that comes across in pure bolts of enthusiasm. What's not to like? In issue #9, there's an in-depth article on how *emo* was really the evil force behind the 9/11 attacks that'll make you want to re-evaluate Bin Laden's involvement; a piece on how she got hired as Lucky the fucking Leprechaun at the Mall of the America's Cereal Adventure; and her past involvement with the Militant Grammarians of Massachusetts. Buy several. Spread the joy. —Todd (Tight Pants!, 918 17th St. East, Apt #1, Minneapolis, MN 55404)

URBAN GUERRILLA, #11, \$1.50, 8 1/2 x 11, copied, 32 pgs.

I generally hate it when folks use too many fonts, but there's something charming about the anarchic way these ones do it, and it's enhanced by a thick body of interesting photos (including brief nudity). Interviewed are Blown to Bits, Iron Lung and Nicki Sicki, and there's a fully illustrated guide to the high spots of Berkeley. Overall focus is on thrash/core and it's surroundings and how can you lose? —Cuss Baxter (PMB 419, 1442A Walnut Street, Berkeley, CA 94709)





Guilty Pleasures

M. Christian, ed., paperback, 236 pgs.

I'm actually surprised that this book was sent to *Razorcake* for review. It's published by an indie, though, so I figured I'd check it out. *Guilty Pleasures* is an anthology of erotica writers confessing about their "true" sexual lives. The stories cover most of the spectrum of fetishes and non-traditional sexual practices: from sadism to teenagers having sex in a confessional to cross dressing to homo- and bisexuality to foot fetishists to one lonely exhibitionist who masturbates in front of the window when she sees a guy walking by (not every time she sees a guy walking by. Just once or twice. But she uses a beer bottle). Some of the writers are more literary than you'd generally expect from erotica. One guy in particular writes almost just like Ernest Hemingway (short sentences, blunt details, getting to the point more through repetition than through description), except his story is about being obsessed with fucking women in the ass. It's kind of hard not to laugh through that story. On the whole, I wouldn't say the stories are a turn on, and I'd imagine fans of erotica would probably be disappointed by the diversity of these stories (because surely no one is into *every* fetish in this book, and pretty much anyone could find something shocking and objectionable in these stories) and the literary style of most of the writers. But if you want to take a peak into other people's bedrooms and see what kind of weird sex they're having, this beats crawling around in your neighbors' bushes. —Sean Carswell (Black Books, PO Box 31155, SF, CA 94131)

Lanky

Aaron Cometbus, paperback, 90 pgs.

I don't know why I get sucked into reading every issue of *Cometbus*.

Actually, I do know why. It's because Aaron writes at a level that's miles above what you would expect from a personal zine. I'll even go so far as to say that he writes at a level above most writers: zinesters, journalists, "serious literary authors," whoever. He has the ability to draw you completely into his world, and he has the talent to express deep thoughts simply and clearly. I also really respect the fact that he can write at this level and that he has all this talent and that he's developed such a large audience, yet he still publishes everything himself. That says a lot.

Still, every time I finish reading an issue of *Cometbus*, I swear that I'll never read another issue. The reason for this is, despite the fact that I really think highly of his writing, Aaron Cometbus has mastered a tone that lingers somewhere between melancholy and nostalgia. I can't read his stories without getting the feeling that, though the past was really cool and full of good times and wonderful people, it's all over now. That coolness and those good times and wonderful people are all gone and the present stinks in comparison. I get stuck in this mindset. I start thinking about all the great friends I had and drifted away from. I mull over great times gone forever. It depresses me. Then I have to snap myself out of it. I have to look at *Cometbus* and remind myself that — this issue, anyway — takes place in 1984, when Aaron was nineteen years-old. And I've been nineteen, and I lived through 1984, and I wouldn't go back to either of those times even if I could.

I fully admit that this may just be a personal problem, though. I'm talking more about my reaction to the book than I am talking about the book itself.

Lanky is technically issue #47 of *Cometbus* (and yes, I know that #48 is out already). In the introduction, he says that it's not really a book. But it is a book. It's bound like a book and it's one long story with a plot and sub-plots and well-developed characters. It's a novel. *Lanky* tells the story of Aaron's first love. We follow a group of young punk rockers, most of whom are children of professors, living, partying, becoming friends, separating, and coming of age in Berkeley. Aaron and Lanky fall in love and have a relationship in this atmosphere. In some senses, it's a classic love story, but the characters are original and interesting enough, and the setting is different enough to make you forget the classic elements of the story and just read along. I found myself feeling completely drawn into this world, and, perhaps because the narrator loved his characters so much, I became attached to the people in the book. I wanted to get to know them better, to hear more of their dialogue, to see more of their actions, to get out of the narrator's head a little and meet the characters more directly, but Aaron keeps them at arms length. He's very protective of his characters. You get the sense that he's saying, "These characters are my friends. You can tag along and watch what we do, but you can't be a part of us." This is a strange attitude for a writer to take.

Still, like I said, it's a really good read. I think this is Aaron's first novel, and it's an impressive book. As soon as I shake this nos-

talgia, I'll probably go check out his next zine. —Sean Carswell (BBT, PO Box 4279, Berkeley, CA 94704)

This Too Can Be Yours

Beth Lisick, paperback, 140 pgs.

Beth Lisick is a spoken word artist who has opened for Lydia Lunch and Exene and toured the US on her own, so when I started to read this book, I expected it to have that quirky, too-artsy sense that spoken word artists tend to have. Happily, I was surprised to find that none of those elements exist in Lisick's stories. In fact, every time I expected Lisick to be predictable, she did something unpredictable. I guess that's what amazed me most about this book. But first, some basic details on *This Too Can Be Yours*.

This Too is a collection of short stories, most of which are set in northern California, specifically the Bay Area. Lisick's characters tend to be urban, though not the slick, cynical urban stereotype that you get used to reading about. Instead, they're lost or naïve, on the verge of a nervous breakdown or close to realizing that their lives have taken a drastically wrong turn. They're bumbling into situations without enough self-awareness to know they're fucking up. They're wise enough to know that the world's a cruel place, but strong enough to keep trying. They're every bit as diverse as the people you pass on the street every day. Lisick has a real talent for getting into people's psyches, and this makes her characters seem like people you know. All of the stories are told in the first person, so it would seem as if all the characters would be in similar situations, but Lisick gives her characters a range of voices. In one story, you'll hear a performing artist tell of his failed mime experience, in another story, you'll hear an aging suburbanite tell her story about taking off to San Francisco for a weekend, ostensibly in hopes of visiting her daughter. Lisick handles all of these voices well, even when she's writing in a male voice. Her stories are convincing and fun, and she manages to get to the depth of a character's life and emotions pretty quickly.

I enjoyed all of the stories, but I definitely had my favorites. "Aerosol Halo" is about a young woman who becomes the traffic girl for a local SF television station and gets swept up in small-time fame. Lisick captures this young woman's enthusiasm and selective vision very well. "Back to the Future" is a funny story about a woman going to her ten-year high school reunion, and even though it's the last story in the book, and even though, at this point, I thought I knew Lisick's writing well enough to know what was going to happen, there was a cool twist at the end. "We Call It Blog" is about a "weblebrity" writing about a date he had with a woman who is a fan of his web journal. The character is so vain and clueless that he's ripe for ridicule, but Lisick holds off just enough to make him as human as he is absurd. And on and on. There's a ton of good stories in this book. Too many to list individually, but they're diverse and interesting and really fucking cool. —Sean Carswell (Manic D, PO Box 410804, SF, CA 94141)



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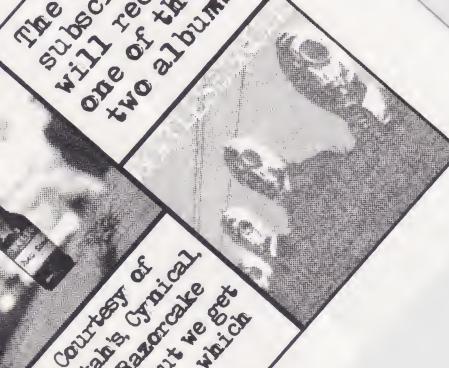
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